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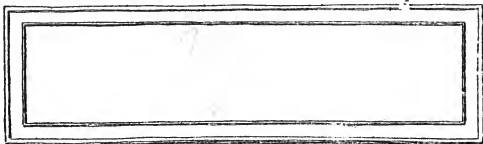
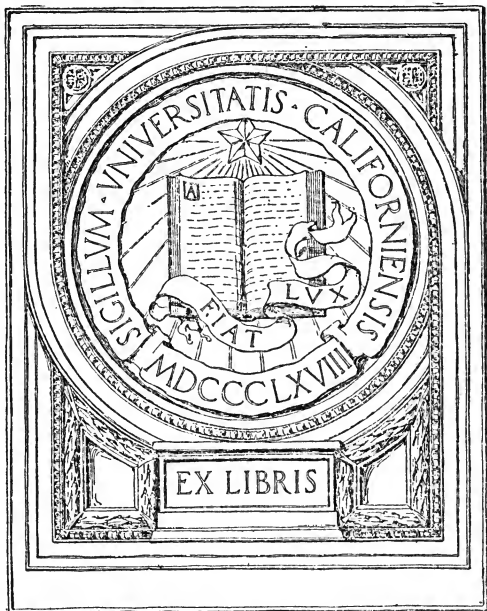


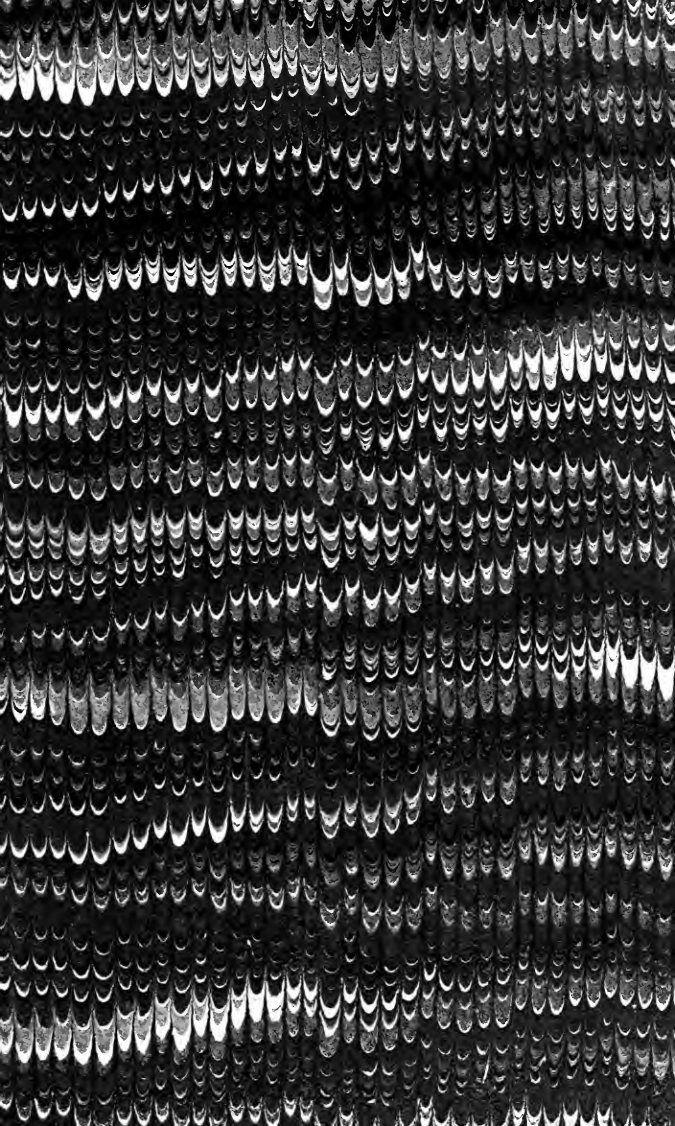
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APPLETONS' NEW HANDY-VOLUME SERIES.

VIVIAN THE BEAUTY.

BY

MRS. ANNIE EDWARDES,

AUTHOR OF "ARCHIE LOVELL," "OUGHT WE TO VISIT HER?"
"JET: HER FACE OR HER FORTUNE?" ETC.

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VIVIAN THE BEAUTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE STUDY OF EUCLID.

"HE loves me," murmurs Jeanne, "a little—not at all. He loves me."

The sun's rays, setting, translate the dusk expanses of the Schwarzwald into gold ; they turn to fire the pointed roofs and lozenged windows of Schloss Egmont ; they kiss with softest bronze the head of Jeanne Dempster, as she stands, idly dreaming the dreams of seventeen, in one of the rose-shadowed, weed-grown terraces of the old Schloss garden.

A half-demolished daisy is between the little maid's fingers ; a lesson-book, face downward, lies on the gravel at her feet.

"Er liebt mich." Despite her English birth, Jeanne speaks German like a true child of the Wald ; sweet, incorrect, rippling German, deli-

ciously unlike the classic Hanoverian dialect of suburban boarding-schools. "Ein wenig—nicht. Er liebt mich—"

"Deep, as usual, in Euclid!" says a man's voice, close behind her shoulder. "Neither Mamselle Ange nor Fräulein Jeanne being visible, I have brought the implements of study out of doors. But I would on no account disturb you. It were pity to break the thread of mathematical calculation so profound. Choose your own time to begin."

And depositing three or four dingy-looking schoolbooks, a pewter inkstand, some quill pens, and a sand-box upon the balustrade of the terrace, Jeanne's master takes his place on the stone bench beside which the girl is standing, and proceeds quietly to light his meerschaum.

"I don't know a word more of Euclid than when I first began it, sir." As she makes the confession, Jeanne picks up her lesson-book, Euclid's "Elements," from the ground. "' Proposition XV. Theorem : If two straight lines cut one another, the vertical or opposite angles shall be equal.' Then why try to prove it? Why need we go on with these hideous angles and right angles? Why do you insist—yes, Mr. Wolfgang, insist—on teaching me things that have no use and no beauty?"

"For the same reason that, were I Mamselle Ange, I would insist upon your learning to ride or dance," says Wolfgang coolly; "to promote

the growth of muscle—mental muscle in the case of Euclid. If all girls were taught mathematics—”

“They would turn out beings as superior as all men?” interrupts Jeanne, lifting her dark eyes to the master’s face. “The thought encourages me, Mr. Wolfgang. I will try my best to see the meaning of Proposition XV., theorem and all, by next lesson.”

A smile, quickly suppressed, comes round the master’s lips.

“The sarcasm, Miss Dempster, is somewhat personal, considering that I am the only man of education higher than a woodcutter’s who, as yet, has crossed your path.”

“The only man higher than a woodcutter? *Du lieber*, and what kind of life do you suppose that we have led, then, Ange and I? We spend a week in Freiburg every summer, sir, and we have gone through the Kur at Autogast; and once we went to Baden-Baden and saw the Emperor start for the Oos races—four black horses he had, and outriders. And I was so near, his Majesty took off his hat to me! And we went to hear ‘Faust’ in the evening, among a crowd of princes and royal dukes and Hochwohlgeborens. Mamselle Ange says I shall be taken to a ball at the Residenz next year, and we know old Baron von Katzenellenbogen and—and the English chaplain’s son at Freiburg,” cries Jeanne, desperately seeking to swell

the list of her male acquaintance by every available item that memory or imagination can supply.

"Emperors, royal dukes, Hochwohlgeborens, and the English chaplain's son at Freiburg," repeats Wolfgang gravely. "I retract my observation. Your experience of life and of men has been vastly wider than I gave you credit for—especially in matters operatic." He glances with meaning at the petals that strew the terrace pavement. "You were rehearsing Marguerite's soliloquy when I interrupted you just now—satisfactorily, I hope?"

His tone is one of banter, and the quick blood springs to little Jeanne's cheek.

"I was rehearsing it, *most* satisfactorily," she answers, with all the steadiness she has at command. "'Er liebt mich.'" Words that in English would scorch her lips, flow from them without constraint in the familiar homeliness of German. "'Ein wenig—nicht.' I had just got to 'Er liebt mich' for the third time—think of that, the third time, Mr. Wolfgang—when I heard your voice."

"Horrible disillusionment! To bring you still more thoroughly from pleasant dreams to distasteful reality, and, as this is the last lesson you will have for a week to come, suppose we proceed to serious work. You are not in a humor for Euclid, it seems, so I will begin by correcting your Latin exercise. 'Est finctimus oritoris poëta,'" opening the page at which, with all the

conscientiousness that is in her, his pupil has been working. “‘*Oritoris!*’ An error of the gravest nature at starting. Perhaps you will give me your attention while I try once more to explain the use of the dative case after the adjective.”

The “serious work” proceeds upon its usual pattern. After an hour’s torture over Latin and mathematics, the master produces a well-used volume from his pocket, and begins to read aloud. Is not English elocution included among the arts which he has engaged himself (at one mark seventy-five pfennigs the lesson) to teach? The book chosen to-night is Shakespeare, the play “*Twelfth Night*,” and Jeanne, hopelessly obtuse in the higher sciences, is moved to sighs, tears, laughter, at the reader’s will. By and by it pleases Wolfgang to hear such crude judgments as the girl can offer upon the play—“Shakespeare,” as he says, “annotated by Miss Jeanne Dempster.” And then they hazard a bold review of it from the standpoint of Teutonic criticism, Mr. Wolfgang’s memory supplying the text of all the notablest translations into German.

“An Englishman who does not understand our language can never appreciate Shakespeare,” he observes, with intentional arrogance. “Hear Heine’s rendering of ‘She never told her love,’ and say if it be not stronger, sweeter, more musical, than the original.

‘. . . . Sie sagte ihre Liebe nie,
Und liess Verheimlichung, wie in der Knospe
Den Wurm, an ihrer Purpur-wange nagen.’”

“No, it is not sweeter,” cries little Jeanne stoutly. “‘Purpur-wange’ is hideous, positively hideous, to my ears. You pronounce English better than I do, sir, except the b’s and p’s. But, for all that, you are German at heart. You have not the English instinct as I have.”

“English instinct ! Shakespeare was only first unearthed, dug up out of the mold of British indifference, by Lessing. Without Wieland, Herder, Goethe, what would the world know of Shakespeare ? Why, this very play, this character of Viola, were never so divinely interpreted as in our own century by Heine.”

For a minute or more Jeanne is silent ; her delicate grave face rapt in thought, her eyes fixed on the cloudlets of amethyst and gold that float, like seraph heads, above the gradually darkening Wald.

“In real life Viola would be a poor kind of creature,” she remarks, with an air of conviction. “No girl with a grain of sense in her head would fall in love with a man, duke or no duke, unless he asked her to marry him first.”

“Exactly the criticism I should expect to hear from you,” says Wolfgang. “Girls of seventeen are simply the most prosaic, heartless, matter-of-fact section of humanity. Talk of youthful im-

agination, fine feeling, the age of romance!—not one woman in a hundred has a spark of romance belonging to her, under thirty! Why, Mamselle Ange—laugh at me as you like, I mean what I say—Mamselle Ange would be a thousand times more alive to the pathos of Viola's character than you are."

"Remember the narrowness of my experience, sir. You told me, a minute ago, that I had never known a man better educated than a woodcutter, save yourself."

A just perceptible shade of red crosses Wolfgang's dark cheek.

"That puts every question of romance or sentiment on one side, does it not? But your experience is soon to be widened. Paul von Egmont and his sister, I hear, after a dozen years' absence, have decided to show their faces in the Wald again."

It is Jeanne's turn to change color. From temple to throat blushes mantle over the child's pale skin; her eyes sink beneath Wolfgang's questioning gaze.

The master has compassion enough to look away from her. "She loves me a little—not" (picking up a flower that has fallen from Jeanne's hand and shredding it, petal from petal)—"she loves me—not!" He flings down the stalk with a certain gesture of impatience. "What better answer could be expected from such an oracle! Do

you know, Miss Dempster, that the sun is down—that unless I wish you good-by this very instant, I shall lose my train?”

“Lose it, sir,” says little Jeanne promptly. “I invite you, in Mamselle Ange’s name, to drink tea with us. Give up dust and heat and engine-smoke for once, and walk to Freiburg, as everybody used to do before the railroad was made across the mountains.”

“The invitation is tempting, Fräulein Jeanne. On an evening like this the very sight of an engine among our Black Forest valleys is an abomination. Still, I have my evening class in Freiburg, my good, studious lads, to whom work means work!”

“And Euclid, Euclid. Let the good, studious lads have a holiday, poor wretches! They will be none the duller to-morrow, depend upon it.”

“The philosophy is pleasant, if not sound. ‘Fais ce que tu aimes, advienne que pourra.’ As I certainly love this garden better than my hot town lodging,” says Wolfgang, “I will risk putting it into practice.”

He pauses, transfers his pipe—the eternal meerschäum—from his lips to his breast-pocket, and with an air half of enjoyment, half of regret, looks around him.

“Paul von Egmont need not have wandered far a-field in search of inspiration,” he remarks presently. “Had the lad contented himself with

painting pictures of homely Schwarzwald lives, of homely Schwarzwald landscapes, his work, at least, might have boasted originality. In Rome, like so many of our German students, he has become but a pale copyist of greater artists' thoughts. But that is how men miss their true vocation—their true happiness also—nineteen times out of twenty."

"Count Paul has missed happiness," says Jeanne, "if the village gossips say true. You know his story?"

"Not so well but that it might be good for me to hear you repeat it, little Jeanne." The familiar epithet seems to escape unawares from Wolfgang's lips. "I know one version of the story only," he adds hastily—"not the version given by the village gossips."

"Well, sir, before Count Paul was one-and-twenty, he had the misfortune to fall in love. His sweetheart was a village girl who had sat to him as a model—Wendolin the miller's daughter Malva."

Jeanne raises her eyes to the master's face, but Wolfgang has turned sharply away; his arms are folded across his breast. "She was the handsomest maiden of the Höllenthal. You may see her portrait, any day you choose, just as Count Paul painted her, in the altar-piece of St. Ulrich Church. Some think," says little Jeanne, "that all her troubles sprang from that picture. No

maiden prospers in earthly love, you know, who has given her face as a model for the Holy Mother's. But these things are too deep for me. Yes, she was the handsomest maiden of the Höllenthal, and the best—to this day, tears come into the village people's eyes when they speak of Wendolin's Malva—and young Count Paul was to marry her at Easter. All the Von Egmonts at the Schloss here were beside themselves with mortification. Such a crime as a Von Egmont marrying a peasant maiden was not written, Ange says, in the records of their house. Count Paul had already determined to be a painter (that in itself was blow enough to the family pride), and was to go to Rome for the winter to study. If Malva had willed, he would have taken her with him as his bride, but the maiden had self-respect enough to say no. 'I will win the heart of the Countess and of her daughter yet,' said Wendolin's Malva. 'Every good woman is pitiful. When the gracious ladies see me alone, without Count Paul, when they see how I shall work and learn and fit myself to be his wife, they will soften toward me.'

"But the gracious ladies," goes on little Jeanne, "never softened. When young Count Paul had been gone about three months, they came one day in their velvets and furs to Wendolin's house, bringing with them a letter—a letter, so they said, that had just arrived from a brother artist of Paul's in Rome, and that it much behooved Malva

to listen to. That letter was the maiden's death-blow."

Wolfgang rises hastily. He crosses to the farther side of the terrace and stands there, his back turned toward the western after-glow, his face veiled in shadow. Overhead the swifts are circling with happy cries, athwart the sun-colored heaven. A solitary thrush calls low from the Wald. The garden, gay with such hardy flowers as can stand the Black Forest climate, is at the zenith of its summer bravery. A spirit of freshness, purity, peace, seems moving, like a visible presence, over the fair and fragrant earth.

"Finish the maiden's story," says the master, after a time. "It has an interest for me beyond what you can understand. Tell me as much as you know of—of Malva's death."

"I know more of her death than of her life," says little Jeanne. "Old Fritzel's granddaughter, blind Lottchen, used to tell me about it. To all who were sad or stricken, Wendolin's Malva was good; and often she would have the blind girl hold her company for days together, and talk to her, when the two were alone, of her love and of her sorrow. 'Count Paul is going to be a great painter'—this ran through all her thoughts—'and he will choose for himself a noble wife. It were sin and shame, his brother painters say, that he should marry a peasant maiden because of her yellow hair and white throat. I should drag him

down to my level ; I should stand between him and his art ; I should make him unhappy with mean jealousies—I, who would die to please his least wish, and think death sweet !’ And then she would weep—at times blind Lottchen could hear her weeping quietly the whole night long—or she would rise, when she thought the rest of the house slept, and pray for Count Paul and for strength to be true to him.”

“True !” repeats Wolfgang, very low. “Have I not heard that she wrote Von Egmont a letter, taking back her plighted troth, declaring that it was better that both should marry in their own class of life ?”

“That letter was written under the Gräfin’s direction (she was Paul’s step-mother, you know, sir ; no real mother would so have risked her son’s happiness). And Paul—there, say the peasant people, was his sin—he took the simple maiden at her word. Ange and the Frau Meyer have heard there were other influences that helped against poor Malva. Some say there was a great English lady in Rome, whose flattery drew the young painter into her train of admirers, and some say there was an Italian play-actress, and some say there were *both*. About all this I know nothing. Malva died ; her picture hangs where you may see it, over St. Ulrich high altar, and her grave is in the Kirchhof, beside the big yew. The carved marble cross at her head was placed

there by Count Paul's order. It came from Munich, and cost more gold than Malva had touched in all her life. But he never troubled himself to visit the spot ; he never shed a tear over her grave. Blind Lottchen kept it fresh with flowers while she lived, and, now that Lottchen lies there too, I have planted pinks and rosemary above them both. I will go to the Kirchhof with you any evening you choose, sir."

"I have been there already," answers Wolfgang shortly. "When I came back to the Wald, two months ago, the first visit that I paid was to St. Ulrich churchyard."

"And you saw Malva's grave? It is a fine marble cross, is it not? But the Wald people say a stone-mason's bill can make poor amends for a broken heart."

"Poor amends, in truth!" repeats Wolfgang, with bitter emphasis.

And then there is silence.

CHAPTER II.

DUTCH MICHAEL'S HOUR.

SILENCE profound, yet fraught with inarticulate murmurs, just as the air is haunted by impalpable odors, from the adjacent forest ; sweet, dewy silence, such as a city-wearied man might

well travel a few hundred miles, now, in this July weather, to enjoy.

Schloss Egmont lies in one of the remoter valleys of the Höllenthal—a district curtly hinted at by guide-books, uninvaded by the great devastating army of personally-conducted cockney sight-mongers. Less than two years ago the older people of St. Ulrich village had never heard a railway-whistle. No telegraphic wires link its interests with those of the outer world. The church-clock, set approximately right on Sunday mornings, possesses an hour-hand only. Do not the storks go and come? Are there not the season of resin-gathering, the season of timber-floating, the rising and setting of God's sun throughout all the changes of the year? What need men here with such finikin apportionments of time as quarters or minutes?

The deep discordance of a far-away supper-bell rouses Jeanne and her master from the reverie into which both have sunk. For fifteen years or more that bell has rested in idleness; no need to summon Mamselle Ange, the housekeeper, and Jeanne, the solitary occupants of the Schloss, to their homely meals. During the past ten days, however, the prospect of Count Paul's return has roused the household into a sort of galvanized life. Dinner-bells, calling no one to dinner, are rung; shutters are opened of a morning and closed at night; Hans the gardener is learning, in a twenty-

year-old livery, to wait at table ; a flag, moldily displaying the Von Egmont quarterings, floats, as was its wont in palmier times, from the topmost pepper-pot turret of the house.

As Jeanne and Wolfgang draw near, Mamselle Ange appears, suddenly, at the central basement doorway—a lamp in one hand, an open letter in the other. No man has ever definitely made out if Ange be maid, wife, or widow. It is the custom throughout the Fatherland to call housekeepers “mamselle,” irrespective of age, nation, or social status ; and Ange, for more than thirty years, has reigned supreme over the still-room and kitchens of Schloss Egmont. A Scotchwoman by descent, Angela Macgregor's youth was spent in Spain, from which country she accompanied the Countess Dolores von Egmont to the Schwarzwald. From that day to this she has never left the grand duchy of Baden. “I dislike the country, the climate, and the language,” Mamselle Ange will tell you in moments of expansion ; “but I stay here for the sake of Paul and Salome. Dolores made me promise to be true to the children. I have kept my word—yes, even when their father brought home another wife. One may be allowed to do one's duty, I suppose, without liking it ?”

“The children” have long passed away out of Ange's sight. Salome, brilliantly married in her teens, is mistress of a London embassy. Paul,

self-exiled at the age of twenty, divides his homeless Bohemian life between the different art capitals of Europe. But Ange remains at her post. "When the boy marries," she declares with a sigh, "I will take little Jeanne by the hand and make my way to Inverness. Paul will return with his bride to Egmont some day, and I shall go back to my father's house, among my father's people, to die."

At the present moment excitement, unwonted, heightens our good Mamselle Ange's complexion. Her cap, at no time secure as to its foundations, is suspended over her left ear; the points of her pelerine hang jauntily from the opposite shoulder. 'Tis evident the arrival of the letter-carrier has broken in upon some mysterious chemistry of the still-room. A huge checked apron envelops Ange's person from chin to ankle; the skirt of her dress is pinned up in the style called "fishwife" by the fashion-books; a pungent odor of raspberries and vinegar breaks on the sense at her approach.

"Here is a fine prospect before us all," she exclaims, or rather soliloquizes, as Jeanne and the master draw near. "Salome obliged to start for St. Petersburg on political affairs—something new for our princess to be so dutiful in accompanying her husband! Paul, no one knows where, in Germany, and a parcel of fashionable fools coming to Schloss Egmont next Thursday! Yes, fashionable fools!" ejaculates Ange, in fiery

staccato. "The celebrated London beauty, Vivian Vivash. . . . What do we want with celebrated beauties in the Black Forest? And her friend—a lady of title—and her other friend, a baronet—and a maid! To be entertained by *me*! 'Trespassers' (easy enough for Salome to write in that airy style) 'upon our good Mamselle Ange's hospitality.' Very great trespassers, indeed! A beauty, and her friends, and her maid, just in the season of the small fruits! Mr. Wolfgang" (awakening to the master's presence with a jump; our good Mamselle being at once short-sighted and absent, her existence is passed in a chronic condition of surprise), "I believed you to have started for Freiburg an hour ago. May I ask you to hold the inkstand upright—I mean to the left?—the ink leaks when it is held straight. If you will wait a minute, Mr. Wolfgang, I shall give you something to carry home with you. My last two bottles of raspberry vinegar have not turned out as clear as I could wish."

"Mr. Wolfgang will drink tea with us to-night," interrupts little Jeanne. "The lesson was so long—I had so many faults in my exercise—that Mr. Wolfgang lost his train, and—"

"And will have the pleasure of walking home by starlight, Mamselle Ange's present of raspberry vinegar in his pocket," remarks Wolfgang, with composure.

"It is not over-clear, Mr. Wolfgang—not to

compare with my company vinegar—but it will make you a nice, wholesome drink during the hot weeks. And where means are small,” says Ange, with a compassionate shake of the head, “of course every little is a help.”

Jeanne glances in an agony at Wolfgang ; but the point-blank mention of his poverty has evidently not disconcerted him. A diverted smile lights his face : as he follows Mamselle Ange up the winding stair which leads from the basement to the parterre floor, he sings, half aloud, the first bars of “The Wanderer” :

“Tired and worn, as the sun goes down,
The Wanderer enters his native town,
And see! His old friends pass him by,
So bronzed his cheek. . . .”

“I do not, generally, admit strangers to this room,” cries Mamselle Ange, pushing back an oaken door on the left side of the landing. “However, for once—Jeanne, my dear,” with meaning—“for *once*, we shall be glad to bid Mr. Wolfgang welcome, and to give him a slice of currant cake, a cup of English tea, such, I am sure, as he does not often taste.—Come in, Mr. Wolfgang” (accompanying the invitation by a ceremonious courtesy). “This used to be Count Paul’s study ; you see his portrait there, above the bookcase, as he was at fourteen ; and Jeanne and I make it our summer parlor. One might call it a comfortable

room, if it were possible ever to be comfortable out of Great Britain. Two lone women seem less stranded, at all events, less like sand on the sea-shore, here than elsewhere, in Schloss Egmont."

It is a room well loved by little Jeanne; the more, perhaps, in that she has no British experiences whereon to found her ideas of comfort. A wainscoted hexagonal room, situate in the western tower of the Schloss, pine-woods in front, pine-woods on either side; a vista of blue moorland showing through a clearing among the forests at one solitary point. As a child, Jeanne used to be told that blue streak was the sea. When Fräulein Jeanne was old enough, said the waiting-maidens, she should sail away thither, like the wood-merchants floating down upon their rafts to the country of the Mynheers, and meet her father and mother, provided she worked diligently at her sampler and sums meanwhile.

Jeanne Dempster arrived at the truth of the legend a good many years ago. She knows that the blue streak is the Rhine plain; knows that her father and mother have crossed a sea the navigation of whose currents not the most assiduous sampler-working—no, not even a mastery of the rule of three—can facilitate. With wiser people than Jeanne, however, the magic of a belief is apt to linger longer than the belief itself. The blue streak is but the Rhine plain! And still, at seventeen as at seven, it remains a heaven-kissed horizon

to the girl's hopes—a far-stretching background to a thousand sweet and unsubstantial dreams.

Twilight by this time has died out ; external objects are no longer discernible, yet can one feel the presence of the woods by the indistinct soughing sound, the piny aroma that enters through the open windows. Unpinning her apron and setting her cap approximately straight before the one small mirror of which the study can boast, Mamselle Ange takes her seat at the table, where a lamp and tea equipage are set ready. The master places himself in such a position as exactly to confront the picture of Count Paul von Egmont.

It is an oil-painting, life-size, by Werner. The boy, in point-lace and velvet, seems to look out with earnest, living eyes from the canvas ; a sidelight falls softly, yet with Rembrandt-like intensity of effect, upon the fair young face.

“You are looking at a masterpiece, sir,” says Ange, as Wolfgang stirs his tea, somewhat absently. “It is said, from an art point of view, to be the best portrait Werner ever painted, let alone the beauty of the subject. People used to talk of Salome's good looks. ‘An aristocratic profile,’ said these German Hochwohlgeborens. ‘An alabaster brow—a complexion!’ Salome was not to be spoken of in the same day as the boy. Paul's *heart* was aristocratic, in the best sense of the word, and his heart was written on his countenance. Ah me!” muses Ange, “I should recog-

nize his smile among a thousand. Salome, for aught I know, may be just a prettyish, faded woman, a doll that has lost its paint—the usual ending of a profile and a complexion. A face like Paul's must grow nobler under the influence of years."

"Take away the millinery, the velvet, the point-lace, the Rembrandt effect," remarks Wolfgang coolly, "and one would call Paul von Egmont an ordinary-looking boy."

"Ordinary!" exclaims little Jeanne, Mamselle Ange chiming in an indignant second. "You can look at that forehead, at those lips, sir, and call them ordinary? Count Paul's face is just the most beautiful thing in the world," says Jeanne, with warmth. It is not the child's wont to be demonstrative; but Wolfgang's disparaging tone, a certain contempt with which he looks up at Paul von Egmont's portrait, have stung her out of her accustomed reticence. "Whenever we leave Schloss Egmont—yes, mamselle, whenever you and I start off for Inverness—we will carry that portrait away with us. I could not live without it."

The master turns; he looks at his pupil with cool scrutiny. (How sharp is the contrast—the thought flashes through Jeanne Dempster's mind—how sharp the contrast between the lad with his affluence of spirits, of hope, and the man, "not clean past his youth, yet with some smack

of age in him, some relish of the saltiness of time," and with disappointment, satiety, regret, printed, deeper even than his years should warrant, on his face!) "I should presume too far did I ask the reason of Fräulein Dempster's enthusiasm," he remarks, after a pause. "As art, the portrait, like all that Werner paints, has its merits. Beyond that—"

"Oh, you must never talk about Jeanne's reasons," interrupts Mamselle Ange; "little Jeanne likes and dislikes, as she does most things, by instinct. From the time she could notice anything she took to worshiping Paul's picture—I believe, until I taught her better, used to say her prayers to it."

"Well for the child," answers Wolfgang, in a tone that brings the blood to Jeanne's cheek—"well for the child, Mamselle Ange, that she used to say her prayers to anything!"

There is a flavor of heterodoxy about the remark that is little to Mamselle Ange's taste. She is an out-and-out conservative, a stickler for every inch of social grade or barrier, and has no idea of a person in poor Mr. Wolfgang's class uttering anything beyond the blindest copy-book truisms. A man must be a "de" or a "von" who should venture, unrebuked, in Ange's presence, upon such a solecism as freethinking.

"Jeanne, from her earliest years, has been educated in The Truth." Capitals poorly repre-

sent the pious emphasis of voice. "She was a luck-gift to me, you see," says Mamselle Ange, her old face softening. "One of your modern school of doctors, your scientists, your men of ideas, Mr. Wolfgang, discovered (in his own warm London study) that the sharp air of the Black Forest must, if you reasoned far enough, be a cure for failing lungs. He wrote a pamphlet about it ; and Jeanne's mother, nineteen years old, and with death on her flushed cheeks, was one of the first sent to Autogast to test the theory. She died ; and the baby, of course, came to me. I wonder during my life how many babies have come, *of course*, to me ! At first I took small notice of the child. I don't care for wise, solemn babies, who look you through and through with their black eyes, and never cry. Besides, where was the use of troubling about a little wretch who would be taken away from me as soon as she could run alone ? However, that day never came. Before Jeanne was three years old (the girl's name is Janet, but everything gets perverted if you live among Germans—to think that, ~~at~~ my time of life, I, Angela Macgregor, should pass by the fool's name of Mamselle Ange !)—before Jeanne was three years old there arrived news that her father had gone down on his way to India, such fortune as he had with him ; and would I like—much my likings mattered !—to keep the child ? Yes, that is how my luck-gift came to me."

"In the days before Paul von Egmont had left his home?" asks Wolfgang, once more lifting his eyes to the young Count's portrait.

"Paul von Egmont started for Rome a few months after the death of Jeanne's father. The lad's heart was heavy enough, God knows, with his own affairs, but I remember his taking Jeanne in his arms—nay, child, there is nothing for you to turn so red about—and kissing her before he started. Since then, all have left me," says Mamselle Ange, passing her hand across her forehead, "the old Count, his wife, Salome. . . . But what," suddenly recollecting her dignity—"what can you care, Mr. Wolfgang, for these family histories? You alluded, I think, to Jeanne's religious principles. She knew her catechism—in English and Scotch, I am no sectarian—by the age of eight. She has been spiritually fed upon the works of Jeremy Taylor and Baxter. And she was confirmed last April—yes, and when these dreadful people come upon us, child, you can wear out your confirmation frock," says Ange, hastily unfolding her letter, then holding it sideways at about an inch distant from her nose. "Seven-o'clock dinners, dressing of an evening, are among the pleasures Salome has chalked out for us, as you shall hear :

"'MY BEST MAMSELLE' (*Mamselle!* And in the old days it was 'alle liebste Ange'—'ma bonne

petite maman.' But nothing vitiates human nature like success. If Salome had married something lower than a prince, she might have a heart in her still) : 'After all, my hopes of seeing the Schwarzwald this summer are doomed to be disappointed. Political events have taken such a turn that the Prince's presence is needed at once in Russia, and, of course, I accompany him. We shall go by Paris—it lies not necessarily on our road ; but could I appear among my husband's people' (Salome taken with sudden affection for her husband's people !) 'did I not make a preliminary visit to Worth? You inquire for my brother. Paul, to the best of my belief, is wandering in Germany, possibly may arrive at Egmont in the course of a week. He appeared at London, late in April, as usual, for the exhibitions, and, as usual, was a victim' (*that* his sister has never been) 'to sentiment. Who, do you think, is Paul's last fair, impossible She? The reigning—ought I to say the dethroned?—beauty of the season, Vivian Vivash ! He saw her first at the Academy, in an attitude of rapt devotion, 'tis said, before her own portrait ; refused to be introduced—you know how little Paul frequents reputable society—and has worshiped her at a distance, after his "æsthetic" fashion, ever since. Even in the Black Forest, you must have heard of our Hyde Park goddess, Vivian Vivash. Her smile has turned the wisest heads in Europe.

Poets have sung her praises ; artists have painted her charms. Not a shop-boy in Oxford Street but wears her photograph in a locket ; not a weekly social but records her triumphs or her defeats. We have had Vivian Vivash bonnets, Vivian Vivash broughams. Preachers have made her the text of their admonitions, tobaccoconists have engraved her on their pipes. And still—I say it in pity, not envy—the dear creature has not got a feature in her face. But you will see her—restrain your astonishment—and be able to form your own opinion. Thinking we should spend August at Schloss Egmont, I invited the beauty—as a pleasant surprise for Paul—to stay there with us ; the beauty, her chaperon and *âme damnée*, Lady Pamela Lawless, and little Sir Christopher Marlowe, a tame baronet, who usually follows in their wake. It is madness, you will say, for Paul to think of marrying a girl without money. My good friend, Paul's life has been one long madness. The time has come when he is certain to marry some one, and Vivian the Beauty would be a less discreditable sister-in-law than a second edition of Malva, Wendolin the miller's yellow-haired daughter ! These trespassers on our best Ange's hospitality will arrive at Egmont next Thursday, by which time Paul, I trust, will be there to receive them. Of course you and little Jeanne will inaugurate seven-o'clock dinners and dressing of an evening during their visit. Salute

the child for me, and believe in the devotion of yours,

SALOME.

“‘POSTSCRIPT.—It might not be amiss to get up a ball, or festivity of some kind, to celebrate Paul's return. You would have his authority, I know, to invite the neighborhood, and cooks and fiddlers could be got over from Baden-Baden.’

“Madness ! Yes, for once in her life, Salome is right,” cries Mamselle Ange, throwing down the letter on the table. “A reigning London beauty, and of a very doubtful kind, to be entertained here, at Schloss Egmont, by *me* ! I just look upon it all as a sign of the Von Egmont lunacy—”

“Or of Count Paul's approaching marriage—which ?” cries little Jeanne, bending down her face, as she speaks, above her plate.

“Of both,” replies Ange, with a kindling cheek. “This beauty, this doll of a London season, will suit him vastly worse than Malva would have done. Malva had red hands, and rough ways, and spoke the peasant's dialect ; but she had a modest woman's heart within her breast. She could love. Time for me and you to pack up, child,” adds Ange hotly. “We shall be wanted for the wedding-feast, perhaps wanted to set the house in order ! Meantime—”

“Meantime,” interrupts Wolfgang, with an air of deference, “I trust, mamselle, that my

pupil's studies will not be interrupted? It is needful that I go to the Leipsic book-fair for the rest of this week; but I have left Fräulein Jeanne sufficient work to do in my absence. Count Paul's marriage," he adds, not without a certain awkwardness, "would naturally break up all present relations; and, as you think there is a chance of it, we had best extend our studies while we may. Now, a little popular science—"

"Never!" exclaims Mamselle Ange with energy. "I hear enough of popular science—materialism made easy—at the Herr Pastor's tea-table. 'Our thoughts are movements of matter,' says Popular Science, 'and our souls a pinch of phosphorus—'"

"Mamselle Ange!"

"Yes, yes, Mr. Wolfgang, I have heard the Pastor read aloud his letters from Jena. I know the jargon of the school. We inhabit an accidental world, in which everything that is is for the worst; more miserable, because more intelligent, than an oyster; respecting nothing but the ancestral apes from which we spring; and looking upon Belief as a crutch fit only for sickly minds to lean upon. No science, I thank you, sir, for Jeanne. An elegant handwriting, a cursory knowledge of polite literature, an aptness at quotation, used to be held the fitting accomplishments for a gentlewoman. These (with a smattering, perhaps, of Latin and Euclid) are the accom-

plishments in which I desire that Miss Dempster should be finished."

"Together with proficiency in the manufacture of currant cakes and raspberry vinegar," adds Wolfgang. "The Fräulein's education will be perfect—an admixture of solidity and ornament that would have charmed Jean Jacques himself."

It is already night when the master leaves Schloss Egmont—one of those mystic, moonless nights on which, say the Wald-folk, the good and evil spirits of the forest walk abroad; Dutch Michael, in his seven-league boots, a ship's mast for his staff, and chanting, in a terrible voice, his litany of temptation :

"Gold for him who will buy—

Who will buy?

Gold at a trifling cost: only your souls to be lost—

Who will buy?"—

the friendly Glassman, with burnished hair and beard, with clothing of spun glass, ready to bestow good gifts on all such human children (provided they were born between three and four of a Sunday afternoon) as shall cross his path.

It is already night, but Jeanne and Wolfgang linger over their farewells beside the outer gate of the courtyard. A roll of exercise-books, to be corrected, is under the master's arm; his pockets are weighted with the bottles of raspberry vine-

gar, which Ange, in the fullness of her pity for his needs, has insisted upon his carrying away.

“Good night and good-by, Fräulein Jeanne.” As he speaks, Wolfgang takes his pupil’s slender hand between his own. “I shall be away five days. Such things have been known as people forgetting each other in less than five days. Don’t take example by your fine, do-nothing London visitors. Get as much Euclid as you can into your head before my return.”

“Euclid—always Euclid !” murmurs the child, drawing her hand away with a movement of petulance.

“Yes, always Euclid, as Mamselle Ange has laid an embargo on popular science. By the way, how many weeks is it since Mamselle Ange first engaged me to give you lessons? Seven—eight, is it not?”

“Eight weeks exactly, sir. Hans had been carrying our first hay the evening you came to speak to Ange. I was in the cart—do you remember?”

“And you threw me a wild rose—you gave me a smile as I passed. Yes, I remember, Jeanne ; the last eight weeks have been the happiest of my life !”

Well for Jeanne that her hand is in her own keeping ; well for her that the darkness hides her changing color from the master’s sight.

“You have the gift of teaching, I should say,

Mr. Wolfgang." If a whole jury of impaneled matrons were present to give her moral support, Jeanne's tone could not be more correctly frigid. "Whatever one does well one likes. Still," she adds shyly, "*happiness* is a strong word to use in connection with Latin declensions, English parsing, and a stupid pupil."

"That depends upon one's power of tolerating stupid pupils, Jeanne" (after a pause. With youth in one's veins, a pause, on a summer night like this, comes dangerously near a caress). "Do you know that I am going back to my stifling Freiburg garret a rich man?"

"Rich in the possession of some cloudy raspberry vinegar and a pile of blotted copy-books," says the girl, with a somewhat forced laugh.

"Rich in the possession of a secret from which I would not part for all the money of all the Jews in Freiburg."

"Knowledge—"

"That has come to me to-night at Schloss Egmont through the agency, did she but know it, of our good Mamselle Ange. Wish me joy, little Jeanne," he whispers, ere the girl can collect herself, taking possession of her hand again, and this time not relinquishing it. "Say only those four words, 'I wish you joy.' I ask nothing more."

"But I am ignorant. What do I know of your life—your hopes?" she stammers.

"Repeat the words," he persists, in the tone Jeanne has never found it possible to disobey. "It does not matter in the slightest degree whether you understand their import."

For a moment or two longer Jeanne hesitates. Wolfgang lifts her hand within a couple of inches of his lips.

"Take my advice. Be quick," he tells her, with meaning, "or you will have yourself to thank for the consequences."

"I wish—it is the most foolish thing I ever said in my life, Mr. Wolfgang, but you force me into saying it—I wish you joy."

He looks, by such light as the stars afford, into the girl's transparently truthful face; then quietly loosens his hold on her hand and turns from her without another word. Away above the vineyards, along the straight white road that leads from Egmont to the outer world, Jeanne watches him—away until his figure is lost to sight among the purple darkness of the surrounding Wald. The clock of St. Ulrich village church is striking as she turns, lingeringly, reluctantly, in the direction of the Schloss.

"Eleven o'clock—Dutch Michael's hour," cries Mamselle Ange, who at this moment is sallying forth, lantern in hand, to make her last rounds for the night. "I never listen to their superstitions, as you know, child" (our good Ange has every ghostly legend of the district at her fingers' ends);

“still, there is no falsehood without a grain of truth at bottom, and the Tannenbühl firs look blacker than I care to see to-night. What in the world has that man Wolfgang been saying to you?”

What, indeed! Jeanne’s heart beats thick and fast. She glances, in a tremor, half delight half fear, across the starlit courtyard toward the forest. All is silent. If the spirits of the Wald are abroad, *and have listened*, they keep her secret well.

CHAPTER III.

A HYDE PARK GODDESS.

DURING the next five days Schloss Egmont undergoes, from roof to basement, the process, horribly familiar to all thrifty Marthas throughout the Fatherland, of “Hausputzen.” Cobwebs, thick with the dust of ages, are swept down; tapestries, moth-eaten into lace-work, are hung up; mirrors and candelabra are unswathed from the brown Holland surtouts beneath which, during the damps of more than a dozen winters, they have been growing gradually lusterless. The blue, or best, bedchamber, untenanted since the death of the last Countess, has been set ready for Miss Vivash. An enchantress whose smile has

turned the wisest heads in Europe, a goddess whom artists rush to paint and poets to sing, will infallibly, so Ange theorizes, turn out a rose-water divinity, a vaporous, artificial doll, to whom faded azure hangings, spindle-legged tables, and last-century cabinets will form a fitting background. Jeanne's pretty little schoolroom (the scene of many a too happy lesson during the past eight weeks) has been given up, in order that Beauty may have a boudoir. The village has been rifled to furnish her balcony with flowers. Frau Pastor Meyer has lent a cheval-glass, brought from Paris at the time of the Pastor's marriage, wherein Beauty may survey her charms. And then a room must be organized within ringing-distance—no easy matter at Schloss Egmont—for Beauty's maid; and there must be an apartment on the same floor for Beauty's chaperon and another apartment for Sir Christopher Marlowe, the tame Baronet who usually follows in Beauty's wake.

"Salome talks about fiddlers and cooks from Baden-Baden," remarks Mamselle Ange with temper. "Much good fiddlers and cooks would have been in such upholsterer's work as ours! But that is just the airy Von Egmont manner. 'Get ready a dinner for to-day, my best mamselle,' the old Count used to say. 'A dozen friends are coming unexpectedly from Freiburg. What shall you provide for us? Anything; improvise as you like, so long as you give us our wine cool.' This

in August, perhaps ; not a pound of ice to be got in the whole country round. ‘And let each course be of the best, and well served.’ It is the same story still. ‘Inaugurate late dinners ; dressing of an evening ; invite the neighborhood ; get cooks and fiddlers from Baden-Baden !’ I hope,” adds Ange, with staccatoed emphasis—“I hope sincerely that Paul will marry his Beauty and be happy with her. I hope my reign is over. I hope Schloss Egmont is going to have a lawful mistress at last.”

The five-days’ Hausputzen has come to an end ; the last touch is given to expectant preparation ; and in the big bare guest-room Ange and Jeanne, full-dressed according to Schwarzwald notions, and with their hands folded in unnatural idleness, await their London visitors. Oh, the discomfort of the high-backed chairs, the faded meagerness of the yellow satin curtains ! Oh, the Chinese monsters on the stove ! Oh, the long-dead court goddesses who simper in pastel, with arched eyebrows, cushioned hair, and impossible waists, from the gilt-and-white panels of this stateliest, chilliest, least habitable apartment of the Schloss !

In vain have Ange and her handmaid dusted, in vain has Jeanne decked every available shelf, bracket, and table, with flowers. The most diligent Hausputzen can not displace the moral cobwebs, the sweetest rose-odor can not dispel the

intangible sense of mildew that haunts the walls, the belongings, the very aristocratic atmosphere of the Von Egmont guest-room !

“Except the Baden-Baden Tanzsaal, I suppose there is nothing like it in the duchy,” little Jeanne says, looking round her with pride. “The only doubt is—do we go well with yellow satin? The Beauty and her friends will scarcely trouble themselves to look at us, I dare say. Still, one would not like to disgrace Count Paul in the sight of his London guests.”

And, crossing the room, the girl sets herself to the contemplation of Ange’s figure and her own, reflected back, as they are, by an ancient and proportionably unflattering mirror, crookedly hung (everything at Schloss Egmont, from pewter ink-stands up to Venetian glass, has a touch of obliquity about it) between the central windows.

Little Jeanne has the true Raphael-red hair, the deep, dark eyes of the Madonna del San Sisto. More than one painter, traveling through the Wald in search of “sacred” coloring, has sought her as a sitter. Sought her in vain. With Malva’s history serving as warning, what girl, within a dozen miles of St. Ulrich, would lend her face as a model for the Holy Mother? Her skin is palely clear, varying with every varying feeling of the quickest, most emotional of natures; her unformed figure inclines to lankiness; her shoulders stoop at times; the bridge of her nose is not innocent

of a freckle or two—and her smile is a gleam of pure sunshine! She has attired herself on the present occasion in the best frock—second, of course, to her confirmation muslin—that her scanty wardrobe owns—a kind of serviceable white dimity much affected for Sunday wear by the young women of the district, shrunk by repeated washings, and showing more wrist and ankle than ever entered into the original intention of the village dressmaker. Her hair, in all its plenitude of red, is set forth in a multitude of the towering plaits dear to the provincial Teutonic mind. A coral necklace, dating from Mamselle Ange's infancy, is round her throat. She wears a white cambric apron, double-soled shoes, of honest Schwarzwald manufacture, and a pair of open-work stockings, knitted by the Frau Pastor as a birthday present, and never put on save for the high and solemn ceremonial days of life.

So much for little Jeanne. Now for Ange, "our best mamselle," elaborately dressed for company, and as well satisfied with the result of her labors as though the prince of man-milliners had consented, for some two or three thousand francs, to make her his "study." A tall, spare maiden the wrong side of fifty—Mamselle Ange has been the wrong side of fifty as far back as Jeanne's memory can stretch—indistinct of feature, with yellow hair arranged in curls on either side a cannon-ball forehead; with a reddish complexion;

with laces, lappets, garnitures, all arranged upon a dozen different conflicting models, and all crooked. (In writing this word I would not hint that Mamselle Ange is disfigured, morally or physically, by any actual twist. She is, on the contrary, upright of structure as an ostrich, a bird at which I can never look without being reminded of her. Neither, scrutinizing her appearance in detail, could you state, specifically, in which particular garment the want of balance resides. And still, notably on this evening when the London guests are to arrive, does the whole voluminous structure seem to totter to its fall.) Her cap-ribbon is blue—when does an ancient blonde forsake her standard?—her dress a sage-green silk, dating from some epoch when our race, it would seem, affected “patterns,” woven in vari-color, along a multitude of flounces. She is redolent of lavender-water, confectioned in the Egmont still-room, and all unlike the foreign flavored essences of London or Paris; is adorned by a Japanese fan, never before known to emerge from silver paper into the light of day, by a museum of hair-rings, and, on her breast, by the portrait of a Macgregor, with high cheek-bones and an upper lip, in a kilt.

“I hope,” says little Jeanne, with solemn eagerness—“I hope we don’t look dreadfully like the dancing ladies in the booths at Freiburg Fair? It may be only the effect of the window-curtains, of course, but we are not *in tune*.” Although she

has never heard of South Kensington, Jeanne is instinct to the very finger-tips with artistic feeling. "Ought we to be paler about the hair and skin, do you suppose? Or ought they not to be yellow satin?"

"Salmon color and yellow are death to a fine complexion," Mamselle Ange enunciates with authority. "I said so to Dolores when first she chose the hangings. But we know what these Spanish women are! Coquetry or devotion, a mantilla or a priest—all the poor dear thought of was her own sallow cheeks. I have been killed, murdered by yellow satin during a quarter of a century, and but for my pious bringing up should infallibly have been driven into rouge. There was the difference in our position. Up to the day of her death Dolores used to put on her ermine with no more scruple than she did her rosary; and I have no doubt Paul's goddess, Miss Vivian Vivash, will have the same elastic conscience. Miss Vivian Vivash!" repeats Ange in stinging accents; "there is a straining after effect in the alliteration, an impertinence in the juxtaposition of the letters. To think, after thirty years' fidelity, that I should be displaced by such a successor—the vapid beauty of a London season, the idol of tobaccoists and photographers, a milliner's block, a setter of fashions, a Vivian Vivash!"

Scarcely has the name left Mamselle Ange's lips, when the crunch of wheels, the cracking of

whips, resound from the courtyard. There comes a minute of keen expectancy ; little Jeanne, like one under the influence of hasheesh, feels as if these intense sixty seconds equaled a year of common life ! The tones of a woman's voice, loud, drawling, uneducated, are heard in the entrance-hall ; and then the salon-door is thrown open, and Vivian the Beauty stands there.

And the first thought of Ange and Jeanne alike—the first thought of those poor uncultivated heathen is, that the great London beauty possesses no beauty at all ! So much is training needed for appreciation of really high art, on or off canvas, in our day !

A sandy blonde by nature, with the phlegmatic temperament, the dense, bloodless complexion of the type, Vivian's hair is deepened, artificially, to a lusterless, inky black. She wears it plainly drawn from a brow that with all its snows, with all its handsome carvings, is soulless. The nose is common ; if it were not for the verdict of St. James's Street, one would be tempted to call it broad. The jawbone is square ; the lips are full as the lips of an octoroon. Miss Vivash has strong, white teeth, eyebrows carefully selected to match her hair, a pair of unabashed, steel-colored eyes, an excruciating waist, a throat, and shoulders. She wears a tight-fitting pearl-gray traveling-dress, a tiny pearl-gray hat, with a solitary tuft of gilt feathers, pearl-gray gloves and boots, and a neck-

let of dead gold. Not a discordant tint, not a superabundant gather or fold—indeed, the Beauty's dress would seem not so much to belong to her as to *be* herself. In little Jeanne's attire, as in Mamselle Ange's, buttons and hooks are not unfrequently notable by their deficiency. Mortal eye can not discern the means whereby Miss Vivash divests herself of that shimmering, foldless dress of hers, unless it be by some mysterious snake-like process of sloughing. There is, indeed, an indescribable look about her whole person—the small head thrown back upon the thick throat, the gleam of gold, the pale chill eyes—that causes Jeanne, in this first moment of meeting, to recall the gliding, deadly inhabitants of the Schloss moat with a shudder. The impression, like most of little Jeanne's "fancies," is destined to stand the test of time.

"And so this is Schloss Egmont! I didn't think such a hideous place was possible out of a pre-Raphaelite nightmare. What a paper, what curtains! I feel a moral indigestion already. And you" (she produces a pair of double glasses, and gives Jeanne a cruel stare—a stare such as high-born dames, not beauties, are in the habit, doubtless, of bestowing upon herself)—"you, I suppose, are the Mamselle Ange of whom our dear Princess spoke?"

(For Beauty is on so equal a footing with titled personages that she talks of them ever in such terms as "dear" and "sweet"! Unless,

indeed, titled personages chance to have offered her a rebuff—when hey, *presto!* flow expressions the reverse of pearls and diamonds from those roseate but plebeian lips.)

Mamselle Ange rises, with stiff politeness, and prepares to do the honors. She has stood too much on her own dignity to meet the travelers at the house-door. Miss Vivash may be the most beautiful woman in Europe—may be the future mistress of Schloss Egmont—Mamselle Ange is a Macgregor and a gentlewoman, bound to show hospitable courtesy to Paul von Egmont's guests, but as an equal, not a dependent.

"Miss Vivash and her friends," she remarks, with a courtesy of thirty years ago, "are welcome to the Black Forest. Being uncertain whether you would take refreshment on the road, I—"

"Refreshment!" interrupts Vivian, with the point-blank rudeness that sits so naturally on her. "We were present at a cannibal repast, somewhere at some unearthly hour of the morning. Every conceivable variety of nastiness—raw ham, sour cabbage, sausages, and upward of a hundred natives—you are one of them, doubtless?—devouring, fearfully and wonderfully, with their knives!"

Ange draws up her spare figure to its fullest height.

"Every nation has its own manners, as every class in life has its ideas of breeding," she remarks sententiously.

The Beauty condescends not to reply. She continues to stare at the faded yellow curtains, the tasteless hangings, the high-backed chairs, the figures of the housekeeper and little Jeanne—continues to stare steadily, through that double eyeglass, familiar to every idle apprentice of the London streets, with an air of mock criticism at once languid and aggressive.

“I declare it is all quite too deliciously horrid,” she drawls at length. “Lady Pamela—Sir Christopher” (turning to two new personages who, at this moment, make their appearance in the doorway), “come and see what is to be seen. I have agreed to spend a fortnight here—two weeks, fourteen days—hours that it would require a Babbage machine to calculate—and I look to you, between you, to hinder me from committing suicide.”

Lady Pamela Lawless is about as plain as it is possible for a woman possessing youth and health to be; and still, go where she will, Lady Pamela’s fresh, frank, irregular face is a popular one. Needless to speak of defect of feature where all is defect. Lady Pamela has a complexion honestly white-and-red as a Lancashire rose, a pair of humorously twinkling greenish eyes, fifteen hundred a year absolutely under her own control, and dimples. She is dressed in a white serge short enough to allow you to do more than guess at a pair of pretty ankles, scarlet stockings, and a cap

to match ; a cap of the form known, I believe, in the trade as the "Vivian toquet."

If Mamselle Ange and Jeanne gazed, awe-struck, at Beauty's sheeny, snake-like gracefulness, you may imagine how their eyes widened at the ankle-short skirt, the head-dress, the scarlet stockings of Lady Pamela Lawless !

"It seems that we shall have to introduce ourselves." And, stepping forward, Lady Pamela bestows a hearty hand-shake, first on Mamselle Ange, then on Jeanne. "As I am chaperon of the party, suppose I go through the ceremony categorically. You see before you, ladies, Miss Vivian Vivash, of cosmopolitan celebrity" (with a showman-like wave of the hand indicating Beauty—poor Beauty, whose head, like that of Lamb's Scotchman, must go through an anatomical operation ere a joke could enter it). "Miss Vivash has had the honor of appearing, ladies, before half the crowned heads in Europe, has been photographed for the public in thirty-five different attitudes, and is commonly supposed to be the most marvelous specimen of our race ever beheld since the days of Solomon ! Secondly, Lady Pamela Lawless" (accompanying the mention of her own name with a bob-courtesy like a charity school-girl's). "And, thirdly, Sir Christopher Marlowe, of whom Shakespeare wrote, prophetically, in divers texts : 'He capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he writes verses, he speaks an infinite

deal of nothing, he smells of April and May. From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth. He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him more.' "

Sir Christopher Marlowe is a very small, scrupulously dandified man of seven- or eight-and-twenty. In the present free-and-easy generation of wideawakes and shooting-jackets, many men lie open to the charge of bringing the country into Pall Mall. Sir Christopher carries Pall Mall about with him like an atmosphere. He is as pink-complexioned as any lovely wax Adonis in a barber's window, regular of feature, with dark mustache, and inch-long regulation whiskers; wears a tall hat and frock-coat, even when he travels; wears guillotine collars, pointed boots, a crutch, and a bracelet—and, withal, is one of the finest-hearted little English gentlemen in the world! As a leader of cotillions, a singer of after-dinner songs, an amateur actor, a stout rider across country, who does not know "Kit Marlowe"? Who (among his own set, at least) did not rejoice when, at the close of last season, Vivian the Beauty—stalking bigger game just then—thought fit to jilt him? "Sir Christopher is Beauty's slave to this hour," says the section of the world who believe that there can be no kernel in this light nut; that the soul of the man is his clothes. "See how Quixotically he makes himself the champion

of her fame! How he stood by her—when so many fell away—after that affair at the Orleans! How constantly he remains her shadow, go where she will! The Beauty has but to lift a finger, and she can become Lady Marlowe to-morrow.” Kit Marlowe’s friends—those more especially who watched him recover from the first shock of Vivian’s infidelity—think otherwise.

“The Princess ought to have warned one, positively, of the treat that was in store,” remarks Miss Vivash, when the introductions are over. And, heeding her hosts no more than the Chinese monsters on the stove, she walks across to one of the window-curtains, then holds up a point of its moth-eaten texture between her finger and thumb. “If ever I leave Schloss Egmont alive, I shall feel it a duty to carry away a piece of the drawing-room tapestries for the British Museum—‘Specimen of Teutonic art-taste, as shown in house decoration.’”

Mamselle Ange seats herself on the central, most impossibly stiff-backed ottoman of the *Saal*, arranges her flounces, and clears her throat in a short, dry fashion that Jeanne knows to be prophetic.

“This drawing-room was furnished, as it now stands, when the Countess Dolores, one of the most noted beauties of her day, came here as a bride. That was in ’forty-one.”

“’Forty-one—of which century?” inquires Vivian, with artless impertinence. “The seven-

teenth—the eighteenth? Surely these tapestries must date longer back than a hundred and fifty years ago?”

“They date back to July, eighteen hundred and forty-one, my dear young lady; ten years or so before you were born.”

Vivian’s cheeks fire. She has, in truth, left her six-and-twentieth birthday some way behind, and the subject of age and dates is distasteful to her, as Mamselle Ange, with fine feminine intuition, would seem to have discovered.

“In eighteen hundred and forty-one Count Oloff brought his bride home, and the reception-rooms were redecorated according to her taste. Perhaps I might have counseled blue myself,” says Mamselle Ange, “for I was blonde, and we washy blondes” (she glances at Vivian’s artificially ebon locks) “can not stand the neighborhood of warm color. The Countess Dolores had southern blood in her veins; the complexion of a pomegranate; dark eyes, that seemed to light the room up at a glance.—You never read the Duke de Rochefoucauld’s ‘Portraits,’ Miss Vivash? So I should suppose. Dolores von Egmont is described there, under the title of ‘Nuage.’ She was celebrated in every court in Europe. I have seen kaisers, princes, ministers—I have seen,” says Ange, launching, it may be feared, from the *vero* into the *ben trovato*, “the great Talleyrand himself, in this *salon*, at her feet.”

“How quite too awfully jolly!” responds Beauty, with her drawl. “If the great Talleyrand—whoever that venerable duffer may be—is still alive, pray have him over to Schloss Egmont for my benefit.”

The expression of Mamselle Ange’s face is a study.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAFF.

HALF-PAST twelve is the accustomed dinner-time at Schloss Egmont. Jeanne has passed her life, Mamselle Ange has spent over thirty years, in the Black Forest; and, whatever English proclivities linger in their hearts, their frugal tastes, their hours—shall I add, their blessed contentment with themselves and with their lot?—are German.

This evening, however, for the first time in Jeanne’s experience, a seven-o’clock dinner is to be served. Frau Meyer from the parsonage has given her help as regards the arrangement of dishes. (The Herr Pastor spent a fortnight in Paris after his marriage, and his wife is still the acknowledged authority in taste throughout the district.) Hans the gardener, in rehabilitated livery, is to display his newly learned accomplishments as a waiter. The family plate, emancipated, like Ange’s

fan, from silver paper and darkness, decks the table. Elspeth, the parlor-maid, has appareled herself in her noisiest walking-shoes, in her stiffest *Sonntagschleife*, those marvelous black-silk bows, projecting like kite's wings from either side of the forehead, with which the Black Forest women seek to enhance the scanty beauty Heaven has bestowed upon them. The rusty tocsin, or alarm-bell, is rung for a good five minutes before dinner, rung by Hans's stout arm, with a will that sends forth bats and owls, affrighted, from every ivied jetty, frieze, and buttress, into the flaring amber of the western sunlight.

"I know, by experience, how most evil things taste in the mouth," says Vivian, when the queerly assorted party has met at table in the dining-room—a table that would hold eighty, a room that would not be overcrowded by a hundred guests. "Schloss Egmont gives me a new and horrible sensation. I realize what one might feel as the heroine of a three-volume novel. Blue chambers, faded arras, owls, specters!" (this with a side-glance at Mamselle Ange's figure). "I declare not an accessory is wanting."

"Except the Prince Charming of the story," remarks Sir Christopher. He has a voice at once treble and tragic; enunciates his syllables in a slow, methodical way that heightens, by contrast, the ever-changing comedy of his face. "Rawdon Crawley having gone the way of all flesh, the

world can scarcely hope to be regaled with another 'Novel without a hero.'"

"Surely you could play the part by proxy," cries Lady Pamela, in her off-hand fashion—"play it, at least, until the Count von Egmont appears in person. You could not find a pleasanter occupation."

"Pleasant but dangerous—for the heroine," says Kit Marlowe, with a genial little internal smile he has—the smile of a man who "fancies himself" above all things. "I know my own luck too well to put myself, vicariously, in an absent lover's shoes."

At which innocent remark the Beauty's cheeks fire. She is not without a certain limited conventional aptness. No woman with wits intensified by a couple of rapidest London seasons but must be posted in the second-hand persiflage, the acquired banter that pass muster, when politics are stagnant and the dog-days approaching, for smartness. Here her sense of humor ends. A jest, the approach to a jest, upon the sacred subject of her own charms, is to Miss Vivash a blasphemy—the only one, it may be added, at which she would be greatly disposed to take umbrage.

Persiflage—our great-grandmothers used the word, and shone in the accomplishment. Shades of sprightliest Fanny Burney and Thrale! can it be truly reproduced in the dreary compound of slang and cynicism, the scoffing at all things gen-

erous or solemn, which the present generation calls "chaff"? During the opening courses of dinner things go off smoothly. Hans and Elspeth acquit themselves tolerably as long as Ange's oft-repeated warnings ring freshly in their ears. The soup, the fish, are served with decent quietness. The guests talk briskly between themselves. That their discourse seems to lack edge, seems occasionally to lack meaning, results doubtless from deficiency of apprehension in the hearers. Judging from the effect produced upon each other, 'tis a very feast of reason, a flow of soul, a jackdaws' parliament! The vast old room rings and re-echoes to their incessant peals of laughter. What is the staple of their merriment? Buffoonery, it would seem to the uninitiated, rather than wit. Heavily manufactured jokes, whereof the point consists in the introduction of some one oft-reiterated current word; personalities; scandals, compared to which the reputations slain by Lady Sneerwell and Mr. Crabtree had been as nothing.

This lasts for a time, then the travelers' spirits flag, and with a child's quick sensitiveness Jeanne detects that Vivian is casting round her for fresher diversion than our poor Sir Harry's loss of honor, our sweet Lady Jane's loss of complexion, and other remembered misfortunes of dearest absent friends. She has not far to see! Hans and Elspeth, crimson with heat, are fast lapsing into the stage of obdurate incapacity at which, when fairly

put upon his metal, the Black Forest peasant defies all honest competition. They distribute dishes where plates should be ; they plant plates in the center of the table ; they fling about coroneted Von Egmont spoons as liberally as the personages in a fairy tale are wont to throw about gold and silver. They wipe their sunburned, exudating foreheads. They talk aloud. They giggle. Jeanne can see that Miss Vivash and Lady Pamela exchange glances.

The situation is crucial ; but worse, far worse, is to come. Our good Mamselle Ange has not lived thirty years in the Wald without forgetting some of the axioms laid down by modern Chesterfields in handbooks of etiquette. She knots her table-napkin firmly under her chin at the commencement of dinner, cuts up her meat with the bold action of a demonstrating surgeon, eats cherry jam liberally between every course, and helps herself to all such lighter matters as gravy, condiments, or vegetables, upon the blade of her knife.

“We are told by our masters, the penny-aligners,” says Sir Christopher, pointedly addressing himself to no one in particular, “that the avidity with which this generation flocks to sights of horror is a sign of decadence. Old Rome—fine ladies—gladiators. My taste is pure and uncorrupted. I have never been to an execution or a bull-fight, to see Blondin or Zadkiel. My blood

runs cold at the thought of an innocent fellow creature" (he gives a little shudder, and sinks back in his chair) "risking his life for my diversion."

Mamselle Ange at this moment is really performing prodigies of valor as she swallows poached eggs and spinach from the blade of her knife—an honest, circular-shaped weapon, fashioned doubtless at an epoch when to eat with one's fork would have been looked upon throughout the Fatherland as an effeminacy. *She* sees nothing of the little by-play going on between the guests, pays no more heed to Sir Christopher's attitude of sham horror than to Beauty's uplifted brow, or the twinkle of mischievous fun in Lady Pamela's eyes. Let Ange be once occupied with her knife and fork, the former especially, and there is about her a quite Socratic disregard for all besides. Minor accidental surroundings become

" . . . small and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds."

Little Jeanne suffers, as I believe children alone are capable of suffering, beneath ridicule. Until to-day Jeanne has regarded everything at Schloss Egmont—Ange's best flowered silk, the moth-eaten curtains, the pastel goddesses, the broad-bladed knives—with the unquestioning faith of her age. She sees them, suddenly, as they must appear through the double eye-glasses of Miss

Vivian Vivash, and quivers as with a living, passionate shame !

Accompanying dessert comes art-talk. The late Count von Egmont was himself an artist of no mean merit, and the Speise-saal is decorated with frescoes, painted under his direction, in memory of Germany's greatest classic poets. Above the music-gallery are medallions representing the leading scenes in Wieland's "Oberon." From an opposite side, the Virgin, life-sized, appears at the pillow of the sleeper Herder. Beneath a portrait of Schiller are groups from "Jeanne d'Arc" and "Marie Stuart." A huge mythological tableau from the second part of "Faust" covers the whole side of the room dedicated to Goethe. These frescoes, executed by a well-known Munich copyist, are from designs in the archducal palace at Weimar—designs classical throughout Germany. To Miss Vivash and her friends they are caviare. Miss Vivash, during the past season, has deeply studied her own likeness, in oil and in chalk, at the Royal Academy. She has also coached herself in the history of "Andromeda" (the title of a picture for which she and other town beauties sat as models), and has visited, chiefly on wet Sundays, the studios of several fashionable painters of note. What greater knowledge of the fine arts, unless they be connected with bismuth, antimony, and pearl-powder, should poor, half-educated Beauty need? What should she know of Goethe,

Schiller—of paintings that never hung in Burlington Street—of an artist not introduced to *her* at the annual *conversazione* of the Royal Academy?

Ignorance, however, as in some other cases we wot of, does but lend a sharper edge to adverse criticism. Was ever such grouping seen—such *chiaroscuro*, such anatomy? At last, round the throat of one of the ruddy-locked nymphs in “Oberon,” Vivian descries what she affirms to be a coral necklace—in truth, a wreath of crimson roses; but Beauty’s eyesight is conveniently defective when she lists.

“I declare this is quite too adorably quaint,” putting up her double eye-glass, as is her custom whenever she would be more than commonly supercilious. “Coral necklaces with hair to match, are evidently the last thing out in the grand duchy of Baden.”

And, posing her head a little on one side, she encounters Jeanne’s dark, imploring glance with her stoniest stare—a stare that lengthened practice, the remembrance of countless feminine cruelties recked upon herself, have brought to perfection.

The child feels every secret of her life—such innocent secrets as they are—pierced through by those pale eyes, those double glasses. Every separate bead in her luckless necklace seems to burn like a coal of fire round her throat.

"These primitive customs really take one back centuries," drawls Beauty, without removing her gaze from her victim's face. "I remember my grandmamma telling how, in her young days, the female infant invariably received a coral necklace from its godfather and godmother. Indeed, I think it stood, like King Charles in the oak, in the rubric.—Pray, Mamselle Ange, as we are speaking on serious subjects, shall we have an opportunity of attending Anglican service on Sundays? One would like to study the manners and customs of the British settler with impartiality."

It takes Ange long to answer the question. A person with normal convolutions of brain might reply briefly that there exists neither Anglican church nor Anglican service within a radius of a dozen miles. Mamselle Ange's mental processes, like her millinery, have in them some latent labyrinthine twist which forces her ever into the use of twenty words where one would be sufficient. Irrelevant anecdotes, dating back to her own confirmation; outlying sketches, in the main unfavorable, of Continental chaplains, their wives, their characters, their debts; a dissertation on the relative merits of the Calvinist and Lutheran beliefs, with a passing fling at what she is pleased to term the Materialism made Easy of the day—all these things does she manage, by fair means or foul, to bring in, Miss Vivash listening, with half-closed eyes, with yawns that she is not at

the smallest trouble to dissemble. At length, just as Ange pauses for breath rather than lack of subject-matter, a ring comes at the outer, seldom-used bell of the Schloss.

"A visitor at the big gate!" exclaims little Jeanne, her cheeks reddening.

"It must be the ladies from the Residenz," cries Mamselle Ange. "Luckily, the guest-room for once is in order. The ladies from the Residenz or the Herr Baron von Katzenellenbogen."

And then the door of the dining-room opens, and on the threshold—dusty, travel-stained, more poverty-stricken in his dress than usual—there appears the master—Wolfgang.

CHAPTER V.

HEINE'S LOVE-SONGS.

"HEAVEN bless and save us—the master!" exclaims Ange, in a disappointed aside. "Mr. Wolfgang, your humble servant. You are unaware, sir, doubtless, that you rang at the *visitor's* bell? But for the lateness of the hour, we should have believed it to be a message from the Residenz."

"I apologize for my own identity," says Wolfgang, with good humor, and giving a quick look at the faces assembled round the table. "My

business at Leipsic Fair having ended unexpectedly soon," he adds, turning to Ange, "I took the liberty of visiting Schloss Egmont on my road home.—Fräulein Jeanne, I have brought you a new lesson-book."

He deposits a little paper-covered volume beside the girl's plate—Heine's "Love-Songs" (the hardest lesson of Jeanne Dempster's life may, perchance, be learned between the lines of those pages) ; then, uninvited, draws up one of the emblazoned Schloss Egmont chairs, and seats himself at the opposite end of the table to Mamselle Ange.

"Quite a relief to one's eyes," cries Lady Pamela, in her hearty voice. "That empty ghosts' place has been calling out, loudly, for an occupant—but five is the most impracticable of numbers !"

She glances with kindly welcome at the master's handsome, high-bred face ; and Ange, unthawing, goes through a tardy ceremony of introduction : "Our very deserving friend and instructor, Herr Wolfgang, from Freiburg. Lady Pamela Lawless—Miss Vivash."

Up to this instant, Beauty's sleek head, at its best three-quarters angle, has been studiously posed for Wolfgang's benefit. She turns at the mention of her name, and gives him—not a straightforward look ; Miss Vivash never opens an attack with the point-blank artillery of those

pale eyes of hers—she gives him a downward bend of the white throat, a lowering of the lids, a smile furtive, momentary, but sweet, “luscious to the taste,” as the dictionaries define the word, exceedingly.

Mamselle Ange, with her most marked air of patronage, desires Hans to set another wine-glass.

“Yes, indeed, Mr. Wolfgang, you shall taste our Affenthaler ; I will take no refusal. You are looking warm after your journey—I know what third-class traveling must be—and of course the Affenthaler of Schloss Egmont is not *tischwein*, poor vinegary stuff, such as they serve you in the Freiburg eating-houses.”

She turns, with a Lord Burleigh signal to Hans, who discreetly fills the master’s glass half full. Wolfgang, with the air of a connoisseur, holds the wine up to the light, then sets it down untasted.

“The Affenthaler has lost its color,” he remarks, a little absently. “It should have been drunk a dozen years ago. These wines of the Margravinate have no old age.”

“Mr. Wolfgang—sir !” cries out Ange, her very cap-ribbons standing on end at this outspoken heresy, “I understand you to give an opinion that our Affenthaler—”

“Is no longer in its freshest bloom of maturity. Precisely so. If you will let me counsel you, Mam-

selle Ange, try rather the Schloss Johannisberg. Even in Freiburg," says Wolfgang, with unruffled *bonhomie*, "even at our poor tables in the Freiburg guest-houses, the Rhine wines laid in by the late Count von Egmont are renowned."

Ange's soul is too shaken by such audacity for her to answer. Taking bold advantage of her silence, the master turns to Elspeth, and bids her run down to the cellar for a bottle of Schloss Johannisberg. "Or, indeed, it were best that I see to its transport myself," he remarks, as the serving-maiden, with open mouth and eyes, stares imploringly at her mistress for orders.

"Mamselle Ange, I fear that you must intrust me with the cellar-keys. One would tremble for the fate of our Johannisberg if 'twere left to the tender mercies of Hans or Elspeth."

And, ere Ange can recover her faculties sufficiently to contest the point, he is gone, Elspeth following—her face peony-red at having public attention centered on her, and with the kites' wings of her Sontagschleife seeming to stiffen and blacken as she walks.

"You are better off for visitors than one might expect," observes Miss Vivash, condescending, for the first time since she entered Schloss Egmont, to address herself directly to Jeanne. "Mr. Wolfgang is a neighbor, you say?"

"Mr. Wolfgang is Jeanne's master," cries Mamselle Ange. "A painstaking creature in the

main, and most moderate in his terms, whatever one may think of his manners. Considering that the child only began to study with him eight weeks ago, her progress is remarkable—indeed, for my part, I think they go too far. Girls shone in society, yes, and settled respectably in life, without Latin or Euclid, or Shakespeare readings, when I was young. But, you see, when little Jeanne takes one of her fancies, she can learn as quick as she likes. I have been grounding her, myself, in the polite branches since she was three years old ; and still, until Mr. Wolfgang appeared—”

“Ah ! little Jeanne took one of her fancies to Mr. Wolfgang, doubtless ?” interrupts Vivian, with her slow smile, in her tone of suppressed banter.

“Mr. Wolfgang has the art of making her work, at all events ; I don’t know in what the fascination lies,” says our good Ange simply, “but there is certainly something about the man that forces you into obeying him. To begin at the beginning : I know no more of Mr. Wolfgang than I know of Adam, and had no idea of getting Jeanne a master (though Count Paul has always been most generous as regards her education), when, one fine evening, he appeared—”

“Mamselle Ange !” interrupts the girl, crimsoning with shame. “The history concerns ourselves and only ourselves. You engaged Mr.

Wolfgang as a teacher ; he has fulfilled his engagement punctually. That is enough."

"Oh, not near enough!" cries Vivian with ingenuous curiosity. "I do so love the details of these little family historiettes! You were speaking of a certain fine evening, mamselle" (and she turns with an air of suave impertinence to Ange). "You know no more of the fascinating Wolfgang than you know of Adam, although Count Paul had been most generous as regards Jeanne's education, when—he appeared."

"Yes, our first parent appeared," echoes Sir Christopher, in his thin, solemn voice. "The situation is worthy of Milton."

"It was toward evening, I know," says Ange, unconscious that she ministers, in her garrulity, to her guests' diversion and to Jeanne's torture. "I had been trying to settle up the haymakers' wages with Hans (the lad is as honest a *German* as breathes, but, take it which way one will, I can never come nearer him than a mark and some pfennigs in an addition sum) when Elspeth brought in a card: 'Wolfgang. English teacher, from Freiburg.' And before I could say yes or no as to whether I would see the man, he had followed her in. 'A poor student of good birth'; all your reduced people tell the same story; 'would teach English, mathematics, classics,' Heaven knows what besides, on any terms I liked to give, and sought my patronage—*my* patronage!—as a

stepping-stone to the noble families of the neighborhood—”

“And you bestowed upon me the best of all patronage,” cries Wolfgang, who, unseen by Ange, has at this moment reëntered the room. “Noble families loom as far away in the distance as ever, but I have had Fräulein Jeanne for a pupil. Now for our Schloss Johannisberg.” He is tenderly supporting a cobwebbed, wicker-swathed bottle on his arm. “We will see if the jade Rumor speaks true as to the contents of the Von Egmont wine-bins.”

CHAPTER VI.

AT TWICKENHAM.

WITH a sense of relief so intense as to border on pain, Jeanne Dempster escapes, at length, into the cool, green quiet of the gardens.

Sky, earth, and air seem to greet her with a friendlier welcome than their wont. She can hear the mill-stream rushing downward from the Blauen Mountains, the tinkle of far-off cattle-bells on the upland slopes ; can hear the wild doves cooing themselves to rest among the forests. Away to the right, above a stretch of reddish-purple vineyard, she can discern the point of road where the other night, as on many a night before, she watched the master's figure disappear-

ing in the starlight. The dew-kissed flower-borders smell sweet ; already a rim of young moon shines, silver white, upon the lustrous heaven. Jeanne's new lesson-book, Heine's "Love-Songs," is in her hand. She opens it at hazard—say, rather, under the master's guidance, for a slip of paper marks a certain page :

“Maiden with the lips so rosy,
With the eyes so softly bright,
Sweetest maiden, I keep thinking,
Thinking of you day and night.”

It seems to the girl that Wolfgang's voice reads aloud, first in German, then in extemporized English rhyme, as is his custom. She forgets her country-made dress, her coral beads, forgets the burning sense of shame in her own existence that, helped by Vivian's eyes, has tortured her during the mortal hour and a half of dinner. Another strip of paper guides her a page or two further on :

“The flowers, they prattle and whisper,
With pity my lips they scan ;
Oh, be not unkind to our sister,
Thou pale-faced, woe-worn man !”

Jeanne Dempster reads the lines under her breath with a sense of pleasure such as no verse of poetry has ever yielded her before. Not heeding which path she takes, she makes her way loi-

teringly to the western terrace, pauses beneath the shadow of a thickly trellised arch of juniper, and finds—a pair of arms outheld, in the twilight, to receive her.

“Mr. Wolfgang—sir!” she exclaims, starting back hurriedly from the threatened embrace.

The master takes possession of her hands. He bends down, and, with the air of one who well knows the language he is reading, peruses her face.

“Have you been busy during my absence as I desired, little Jeanne? Have you prepared good store of Latin and Euclid for my return?”

“I have been busy getting ready for the visitors—busy among polishing-brushes, cobwebs, and beeswax,” answers Jeanne demurely. “I have been working every moment of my time—for Count Paul, not for you.”

“For Count Paul, not for me! Well,” cries Wolfgang, with a movement of impatience, “what else should I expect? As well accustom myself, beforehand, to the fate that is inevitable! You feel rewarded already, I hope, mein Fräulein. Paul von Egmont’s English guests come up to your expectations? You are charmed with London millinery, dazzled by London wit, by London beauty?”

Jeanne is mute; and the master, after a few moments have passed by in silence, repeats his question.

"To value millinery and wit at their right value, one would need higher education than mine, sir." And now, with a sudden effort, the girl breaks free; she turns her head away from her companion. "Beauty speaks for itself. One needs no teaching to appreciate it."

"And Miss Vivash is exquisitely handsome, ausgezeichnet schöne," remarks Wolfgang, lapsing, as he always does when a subject moves him strongly, into German. "And gracious, condescending as she is handsome. The lips of a Greek statue, a throat of marble, a forehead—Fräulein Jeanne" (coming back, with a visible effort, from poetry to prose), "we are losing the light, such remnant of light as there is. Let us set to work at once."

"I have no work ready," she answers him shortly. "I have had other things to attend to than Latin and Euclid, and the loss of one evening can not signify to any one."

"You think so?" returns Wolfgang, taking her "lesson-book" from her hand. "When you are a few years older you will know how much the loss of one evening, of one minute, can signify under certain circumstances. As you have neglected more important studies, we can, at least, go through some German reading. Heine's songs, as we have them here, will serve as an exercise."

He returns her the volume, opened at a fresh page—the "Ballad of Lurlei."

“‘I know not what trouble haunts me,’” repeats Wolfgang, looking over his pupil’s shoulder. “Ah! here we have something that will do for us. Here we have a gem in simplest setting—a cameo in printing-ink. Turn your face round—so! Forget that I am your master, forget altogether that I exist, and give every word its due accent. When you have read the poem through, aloud, we can parse it.”

And with this the lesson begins: Heine’s passionate verse read falteringly in the pulse-stirring gloaming, by a girl of seventeen, her heart already feverish with the first throbs of jealousy, and under the tutorship of the man she loves!—

“I know not what thoughts oppress me,
And make me eerie and low;
A legend it troubles and haunts me—
A legend of long ago!”

“‘I know not what thoughts oppress me,’” repeats Wolfgang, when Jeanne has stumbled through her parsing. “Grammar is not your strong point, mein Fräulein. Your nominatives and accusatives are shaky, your views as to subject and object reprehensible. But you know how to read poetry. Learn as much of Heine as you choose by heart for your next lesson, and—”

There comes the sound of a drawling voice, the crunch of steps is heard upon the gravel, and

Lady Pamela and Vivian, arm-in-arm, approach slowly along the terrace.

Lady Pamela is habited still in her favorite colors, red picked out with white, like a Queen Anne's mansion. Beauty's dress is of opal silk, tight-fitting as wax, shining, undulating, with every movement of her supple limbs. Miss Vivash wears an emerald bracelet—that has a history—on her left wrist; an emerald star—that has also a history—in her classically sleek, ebon hair. The abundant outlines of her shoulders and throat stand out clear against the milky sky. The tender twilight refines the over-large lips, supplies a passing softness to the pale, cold eyes. It is one of the Hyde Park goddess's handsomest moments.

“How quite too delightful this is, Pamela! Such freshness, such purity, after our four weary months of London fever.” She sees Wolfgang and his companion at a glance, and resolves, with the slakeless thirst for conquest that is in her, to pose on the instant, for the master's benefit. “Where can our good little Jeanne have vanished? Not a bad sort of child, truly, putting looks aside, and considering her plebeian surroundings.”

“Plebeian surroundings—when she has the Herr Wolfgang for a master!” suggests Lady Pamela, with meaning.

Is the feeling between Beauty and her chaperon one of hatred or of love? Are they friends

or foes? I, who write, can not answer that question. That they stand toward each other in the relative amity of clever whist-partners; know when to lead through strong suits, or up to weak ones; when to throw away a card, *finesse*, call for trumps, or, if need be, revoke, is incontestable.

“I thought, my dear Vivian, you considered him—”

“I consider that Mr. Wolfgang belongs to the aristocracy of intellect,” remarks Beauty, with effusion. She keeps a little useful stock of such platitudes ever ready for use. “He has that look of strength one does so adore in a man about the forehead, and a manner that only wants the polish of high society to be charming.”

At this point Wolfgang steps briskly forward out of the shadow. There is a kind of suppressed impatience in the movement, thinks Jeanne with a beating heart; yet that his vanity is pleasantly stimulated who shall doubt? Can flattery from lips carved on such a model as Vivian’s fail of tasting sweet, whether the dose be administered intentionally or by hazard?

“Mr. Wolfgang! *How* you made me jump!” cries the chaperon. “I am so ridiculously nervous, such a martyr to timidity!” Lady Pamela Lawless rides as straight to hounds, cuts out her work as valiantly, as any man in the shires; she also during the present season went to a fancy-dress ball in the character of an hussar, spurs, boots,

and all.—“Ah, you here, Miss Dempster? Suppose you lionize me a little about the premises? Miss Vivash is—Miss Vivash is fatigued after her journey, and will wait for us awhile on the terrace—I have no doubt, under Mr. Wolfgang’s care.”

Saying which, lady Pamela rests her hand on Jeanne’s arm ; then, with good-humored force, leads the girl briskly away into a side-path, leaving her friend in the possession of the field, and of Wolfgang.

“And pray what were you doing, Fräulein Innocence,” she remarks, the moment they are out of ear-shot—“you and your good-looking Herr Preceptor—alone in the dark?”

“I—was taking my lesson, madame,” stammers Jeanne guiltily. “Only, as we did not expect the master till to-morrow, I had prepared no mathematics or Latin grammar, and so—”

“And so—it is unnecessary for you to say ‘madame,’ or to look frightened. No one living is frightened at me.”

“Mr. Wolfgang turned it into a reading-lesson. We had just finished Heine’s ‘Ballad of Lurlei’ when you and Miss Vivash came up to us.”

“Mathematics—Latin—Heine ! It strikes me forcibly, child, in spite of your modest rustic airs, that you are a prodigy.”

“It strikes me that you like to laugh at me,”

says little Jeanne—"you and Miss Vivash, with your London ideas, London education—"

"Education!" interrupts Lady Pamela briskly. "Listen to my autobiography, my dear, told in a dozen words, and be wise. I come of poor but not over-respectable parents, Jeanne, both of whom left this wicked world before I had well entered it, and, being an exceedingly hideous child, and portionless, was early trained by the relatives who had to support me in the way wherein I should go. 'Providence has been pleased to deal you a sorry hand, Pamela,' Lord Vauxhall used to say, looking plaintively at my ugly face (Lord Vauxhall is my maternal grandpapa; he broke his first wife's heart, has shut up the second in an asylum, and takes off his hat with the best grace of any man in Europe). 'But we have the evidence of history to show that conduct is fate. Fine play, in the long run, will hold its own against trumps. Miss Rebecca Sharp had green eyes and thin arms, yet she got on, all things considered, better than her fair but virtuous friend Amelia. For Miss Sharp, as you will do well to bear in mind, educated herself *on principle*.' With the spirit of generous emulation thus awakened," continues Lady Pamela, "I also educated myself *on principle*. My grandpapa in those days held a little back-stair appointment pertaining to royalty, and used to enliven his fireside with the newest court scandals and whispers of

the clubs. This enlarged and strengthened my youthful mind. One of his sons, poor Uncle Paget, until ruin and an Ostend lodging overtook him, affected jockeydom, and would give me a mount whenever any abnormally vicious three-year-old had to be broken to the habit. This set up my figure. For my *beau-idéal* in literature I had the wickedest of the weeklies, and Zola's novels; for my *beau-idéal* in art, the exquisite face enameling of my three maiden aunts, the Ladies Vauxhall. I learned to whistle rather nicely to the piano; could tell a high-flavored story with almost as much point as my grandpapa himself; and at nineteen years of age—"

"The story surely does not end here?" Jeanne asks, as her companion stops short.

"At nineteen years of age," goes on Lady Pamela, in a tragic voice, "I married poor Mr. Lawless, a Yorkshire squire, half a century older than myself, and a martyr to gout and jealousy. There came an interlude of dull country-houses, flannel bandages, and Othello-like scenes; and then, at two-and-twenty, I found myself launched in London life, free. From that date forth, even my grandpapa has been proud of my progress. I am quick, like all *gamins* who have been town-tossed in their infancy, and I have sufficient conversational aptness to smatter about most things well enough for my station. Whatever subject is up—the latest imperial policy, the latest suburb-

an murder, pictures, bonnets, Irish members, yes, or even the last volume of *Advanced Thought*, at the libraries—I have only to listen to the ideas of some cleverer person than myself for a quarter of an hour, and then retail them, with a certain air of originality, as my own, at the next dinner-party I go to. I have no intellect, really.”

There is something touching in the way this admission is volunteered. Jeanne feels her heart beginning to warm toward Lady Pamela.

“To literature I am honestly indifferent. Art I detest. Pictures cause a strain on the muscles of the neck which books, at least, do not. A good dinner, a Paris milliner, high-stepping horses, well-looking partners—these are thy gods, O Israel! These are the gods of Lady Pamela Lawless, and people must either take Lady Pamela Lawless as she is or leave her alone. In the majority of cases, they seem tolerably well disposed to take her as she is.”

Lady Pamela’s whimsical talk, whatever weightier qualities it may lack, possesses the fascination of suggestiveness. As she pours forth the flood of quick nonsense which she calls her “autobiography,” a whole new world opens itself *in posse* before Jeanne’s thoughts. Here, amid the wild solitude of the pine-forest, without young companionship, in a climate that for six months in the year holds her prisoner within the four walls of Schloss Egmont, the child’s existence (until

the last eight weeks) has perforce been colorless, passive. A passage of Beethoven rendered by the village Philharmonic, the smell of April's first violets, four little lines of Heinrich Heine's—from sources like these have sprung the keenest pleasures of her lot. The sense of action, of personal participation in the great human comedy, is unknown to her; and, I must confess, Lady Pamela's epitomized description of a highly-strung town life fires her imagination not unpleasantly. A Paris milliner, high-stepping horses, good dinners, well-looking partners!—in what does she, Jeanne Dempster, differ from her fellows, that such delights, had she but the chance of sharing in them, should charm her not?

“You have got my portrait, drawn by my own hand, framed and glazed,” says Lady Pamela lightly. “In return, explain to me the reasons for your own existence. But in three words, Jeanne! People who lead molluscan lives, sea-shore or fields, or that sort of thing, are always beset by the frightful vice of prolixity. Who is Mamselle Ange? Who are you? What are your relations toward Paul von Egmont? And do you and the good-looking master talk of other things than Latin and mathematics in the twilight?”

For a second Jeanne's presence of mind fairly forsakes her.

“You must allow me more than three words

for my answer," she replies presently. "Who is Mamselle Ange? The question by itself would require a folio."

"Then *please* leave it alone!" cries Lady Pamela with a yawn. "Leave Mamselle Ange in damp felicity among the clouds; she looks toppling off the edge of one already, does she not? Who are you? Do you live here? Do you mean to marry Mr. — the man with the Titian face and shabby clothes, who at this moment is falling violently in love with my friend Vivian?"

Jeanne's pulse gives a great leap, then stands still. Far away, above the stiff-cropped juniper-hedges that bound the terrace, she can descry two figures pacing up and down, with many a pause and oft in the quiet starlight. On the instant, with the swift pessimism of seventeen, she accepts as fact the cruel probability of Wolfgang's heart becoming the property of Miss Vivash.

"Mamselle Ange has been Mamselle Ange, and nothing else, as long as I can remember. My mother died here, in the Black Forest, when I was a small child. Schloss Egmont has been my home always, and—"

"And you will eventually marry the Herr Professor, of course," cries Lady Pamela, with a yawn more prodigious than the last—"marry the Herr Professor, and look upon Kaffee clacks,

tobacco-smoke, and Wagner's music as the highest possible form of human enjoyment. Mr. Wolfgang will be none the worse husband, my dear, for having had his peace destroyed by Vivian in the mean time. China and men's hearts are all the stronger for mending, and, if one is positively destined to come to grief, 'tis a consideration to do so in good company. Think of all the big-wigs, the dukes, poets, artists, bishops, who swell our Beauty's list of victims !”

“Dukes, poets, artists, bishops, and Sir Christopher Marlowe,” suggests little Jeanne, at hazard.

Lady Pamela Lawless pauses in her walk. She turns her head aside sharply.

“Kit Marlowe is—a very good friend of both of us, nothing more. When Miss Vivash first rose to the surface in London, and I, thanks to Lord Vauxhall, was promoted to be her chaperon—Beauty and the Beast our more intimate enemies were good enough to call us—we needed, I can tell you, as many a strong hand as might be found to keep us afloat. Kit Marlowe's was one of the strongest. In these latter days, you must know, child, to have a profile has become a profession. (We are an æsthetic generation ; must have our Beauties as we have our decorative needlework, iridescent glass, and Queen Anne furniture. As a consequence, the passport system is abolished in decent society, and warm manners and a cold heart will carry a pretty woman anywhere, pro-

vided the pretty woman chance to be the owner of a Job-like mate.) The existence of a husband," continues Lady Pamela, "makes the sternest Cornelia feel that her girls are, in a certain sense, safe. 'These beauties are the pest of the age,' Cornelia will tell you sorrowfully. 'Still, I look upon them as a necessary evil, a kind of moral lightning-conductor. (Does not one see the creatures' names at the court balls?) As long as Mr. Blank accompanies his wife—no farther, of course, than the lower landing on the staircase—it is not for me to be censorious.' Vivian had no husband, Job-like or otherwise, and when first Lord Vauxhall pushed us into celebrity, mammas with families of daughters did look shy at us. It is a truth, flattering or not, about which there can be no manner of doubt—mammas with families of daughters did look shy at us."

"In spite of Sir Christopher Marlowe's friendship?" says Jeanne Dempster, as her companion hesitates.

"Ah, that is a knotty point—Sir Christopher Marlowe's friendship. Some people declare that we have floated Sir Christopher, others that Sir Christopher has floated us. Why, this very last month—" (Lady Pamela glances at the two distant figures on the terrace) "but for a miracle of mischance, Vivian would have made the best marriage of the season, thanks to Sir Christopher's good offices. You have heard of Chodd and

Chodd : The thing is past and gone, and a count in hand is worth a Chodd in the bush ; still, we may as well talk idly as be silent. My dear, the Chodds are the great Birmingham scissors-people. The Chodds are worth half a million of money. The Chodds are ambitious, weak as water where lords and honorables are concerned, and *deliciously* apoplectic. Chodd *père* took for his second wife my little cousin Lady Ermengarde Vauxhall, aged eighteen, and died—was ever such exemplary conduct heard of?—within a twelve-month. Well, his son, Mr. Samuel Chodd (admire the solid richness of those good English consonants), met Vivian one fine day among the rhododendrons at the Botanical and fell in love with her. I don't suppose he fell in love really—fancy a scissors-man in love!—but Sir Christopher, knowing and known of all men, walked Samuel up and down for three quarters of an hour, in sight of half the fine ladies and gentlemen of London, and chalked out his line of conduct for him. Poor Mr. Chodd had not seen domestic bliss ensue, in his father's case, from the possession of an aristocratic wife. It was said Ermengarde addressed Chodd senior eight times, exclusive of the marriage ceremony, during the eleven months in which he had the honor of being an earl's daughter's husband. So Samuel elected for beauty—a throat, a wrist whereon to exhibit the Chodd diamonds ; and under

Kit Marlowe's guidance found it—in Miss Vivash."

"Who remains Miss Vivash still?"

"Ay. In that resides the moral of my story—who remains Miss Vivash still. Up to a certain point Samuel's conduct was simply perfect. He was as wax in the molder's hands, as the lamb led to the slaughter. Wherever we went in public, that was good for him, we allowed Samuel to go likewise. We introduced him into the celebrated 'notoriety set,' in which everybody must have a reputation—of a kind! We gave him our photographs, we permitted him to supply us with bouquets and opera-boxes, we even allowed him to write as many checks as he chose for our tradespeople. Aided by Lord Vauxhall, we got his name into the fashionable papers as having dined at such a banquet or danced—Samuel's dancing!—at such a ball. The man rewarded us with the usual black ingratitude of plebeian human nature. A party of four-in-hands were to assemble at the Corner on a certain May afternoon, and drive down to Twickenham, where a dinner had been organized by Lord Vauxhall. To this dinner Mr. Chodd could not be invited. (I had another engagement myself. It generally happens that I have other engagements on the occasion of grand-papa's Twickenham festivities.) Samuel took umbrage; gave himself airs of virtue, and us a sermon. 'The party was not a fitting one for *his*

intended wife. He would allow her as much liberty as any honest-minded girl could desire, but he would not—no,’ supplementing his opinions by the very horriblemest expletives, ‘he would not allow her to go to a Twickenham dinner, got up by any disreputable old lord of them all, without himself. He would never be known in the world’—imagine the creature having read Thackeray—‘as Mrs. Rawdon Crosbie’s husband!’ Vivian heard him out with an air of quiet contrition, admired his moral sentiments, promised amendment for the future, and sent him away pacified, a moss-rosebud pinned by her own repentant fingers in his button-hole. And she went to the dinner at the Orleans! That dinner cost her dear. Samuel learned the whole truth next morning, wrote us a letter in the worst imaginable taste, but, alas! only too much in earnest, and started the same afternoon in his yacht for Lapland. Whenever he was more out of temper than usual, it had been a foolish jest of ours to say, ‘Try Lapland.’ On the morrow of the Twickenham dinner-party he followed our advice—with a vengeance.”

Lady Pamela and Jeanne have by this time made the entire circuit of the Schloss gardens. Suddenly, as the last accents of the Chodd tragedy die on Lady Pamela’s lips, they come in sight of Sir Christopher Marlowe, outstretched upon the patch of smooth green turf that borders the moat, and violently flirting, in pantomime, with

Elsbeth, whose ruddy face bobs coquettishly backward and forward at one of the basement windows.

Sir Christopher springs, somersaults rather to his feet, on being thus discovered ; advances with a fantastic kind of Lord Dundreary run ; then sinks on his knees before Jeanne, in an attitude of stage despair, and lifts her hand to his lips.

The girl breaks loose from him, breathless with indignation.

"If these be London manners," she is beginning hotly—

"They be the manners of Kit Marlowe," cries Lady Pamela, with her careless laugh. "Sir Christopher is a licensed jester, my dear simplicity, and no one, even in squeamish Babylon, takes umbrage at his fooling. In this generation of dullards, we are only too thankful to any harlequin who will wear the cap and jingle the bells for us gratuitously.—Jingle them a little now, Sir Christopher ! Dance a breakdown, sing a burlesque. Do something that shall make this miracle of propriety give a hearty human laugh."

"I would rather make the miracle of propriety thaw into a tender human smile," says Kit Marlowe. "A burlesque, indeed ! I will melt Jeanne's obdurate heart by the most pathetic ballad ever written in the English language."

And then in a small, not unmusical tenor voice he trolls forth a verse or two from one of the

latest songs (ironically called comic) of the music-halls. Long before it is over, Lady Pamela, whose yawns have ever advanced in a crescendo scale, has vanished.

“Take me under your protection, Fräulein Jeanne,” says Sir Christopher, with solemn mock gallantry. “Accept my arm, teach me my way about the place, and let us endeavor, as far as may be, not to fall in love with one another.”

Little Jeanne is too shy to say him nay. She rests her slender finger-tips on Sir Christopher’s arm, accompanies him along every fragrant border, through every rose-embowered terrace of the vast old garden, and when, an hour later, they re-enter the house, is in love—not so much with Sir Christopher Marlowe as with herself, and with the universe in which she holds an unimportant place !

Wiser heads, graver hearts than Jeanne Dempster’s might well surrender to the airy gayety, the never-ending animal spirits of Kit Marlowe. He has the effect upon your nerves of breezy morning sunshine, of May roses, of a brook’s music, and, in common with most of nature’s cheeriest gifts, asks nothing from you in return. Falling short of all the stern moralities, all the big aims of existence, living, in fact, “beyond the diocese of the strict conscience,” he is really the very happiest, most happiness-giving of human creatures, a flesh-and-blood refutation of the pessimist philosophers,

who now, in this nineteenth century, have migrated, after the fashion of their kind, from Germany to Oxford.

No moral dyspepsia, or feeling of his own pulse, no questioning as to whether life be worth living for Sir Christopher ! Life is a game—a game in which every man eventually loses : wisest to lose as slowly and as gracefully as one may. This is his creed, and, honest in his epicurean principles, he gathers honey, like the hymn-book bee, from every opening flower, and is content.

“The Mirabels and Dorimants of comedy,” said Elia, “must not be judged in our every-day law-courts. They get out of Christendom into a land where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom ; a happy breathing-place from the burden of a perpetual moral questioning.”

Sir Christopher’s friends—who that knows him is not his friend ?—are well disposed to give him a like benefit of clergy.

“Little Kit Marlowe is a general benefactor,” Lady Pamela Lawless has been heard to declare —“a tonic, *pro bono publico*, a pick-me-up for all who need. As well dissect a butterfly with a tomahawk, as well weigh sunshine (oh, yes, I know all about Mr. Crookes and the radiometer) —as well weigh sunshine in a grocer’s scales, as apply rule-of-thumb measurement to the character and motives of Sir Christopher Marlowe.”

And society—with a shrug of the shoulders, it may be, an elevation of the eyebrow, a whisper behind the fan—society, on the whole, is disposed to endorse the sentiments of Lady Pamela !

CHAPTER VII.

BEWARE !

“SOCIETY ! You have made vastly creditable social progress, Miss Dempster, considering the shortness of your apprenticeship—vastly creditable, in truth.”

The dark oak walls of Count Paul’s study are unilluminated by lamp or candle. Such light as the young moon yields falls full upon the boy’s portrait, upon the marble heads of Goethe and Schiller above the book-shelf. Beside an open window Jeanne and her master, a foot or two apart, are deep in converse : Wolfgang, cigar in hand, stands upon a projecting ledge or balcony that surrounds three sides of the tower ; Jeanne is within, her elbows resting on the sill, her face outstretched to court the dewy, fragrant freshness of the night.

“It gives me pleasure to merit your praise, at last, sir,” she remarks demurely. “During the last eight weeks I have worked at participles and declensions, at angles and right angles—have

worked, to the best of my belief, well. This is the first time you have been good enough to encourage me by such a word as 'progress.' I am grateful to you."

And, raising herself to her full height, Jeanne drops her master a mocking little courtesy, then stands before the window with meek face, with arms crossed, as if in humility, upon her breast.

"Grateful?" repeats Wolfgang, coolly skeptical. "Yes, till to-night I might have been weak enough to credit you with such a feeling! I see you now as you are, Miss Dempster—open to sweet words, won by any idle coxcomb, by any cajoling voice that speaks, like the rest."

"We will leave gratitude alone, sir. I am flattered, if you like the expression better, by your high opinion of me."

"Flattered—by the talk of Sir Christopher Marlowe, the first empty-brained, eye-glassed pop-injay who has happened to cross your path."

Although, on common occasions, the master speaks English admirably, his accents, the moment he is moved, take a cadence unmistakably Teutonic. At his pronunciation of the word pop-injay, Jeanne smiles.

"In English, sir, it is not our custom to say *bobbingjay*. Excuse my want of politeness, but you have so often asked me to correct you, if need were, and these '*B*'s' and '*P*'s' are really stumbling-blocks to a *Chairman* tongue."

Wolfgang scans her for a few seconds, grimly silent. "Jeanne," he then begins, flinging away his cigar, and, with a quick spring, entering the study-window, "what did yonder poor little dandy find to say to you during the sixty minutes or more that you and he were walking about the gardens alone in the moonlight?"

"Sixty minutes? Is it possible? Why, those sixty minutes passed like a flash of light," cries Jeanne artlessly. "You can not think what pleasant speeches Sir Christopher Marlowe made me—how thoroughly he intends that we shall enjoy ourselves here at Schloss Egmont during the next fortnight!"

"And you were enchanted by his intellect, the caustic depth of his observations, the loftiness of his views, the delicate originality of his wit?"

"What judge am I, sir?—I, who till Mr. Wolfgang came accidentally to the Schwarzwald, had never spoken to any man of higher culture than a wood-cutter! It would be more to the point for *you* to say, after two hours' experience, what you think of the wit and originality of Miss Vivash!"

The abrupt side-wind takes Wolfgang somewhat aback.

"Miss Vivash is—a miracle of touching frankness." The master has to consider within himself for some moments before pronouncing the eulogy. "She has passed through the furnace of publicity

scathless—unworldly as she is beautiful, full of fine exalted feeling, full of romance, of sensibility ! ”

A bitter little laugh breaks from Jeanne’s lips. With the story of Mr. Samuel Chodd, the Twickenham dinner, Lord Vauxhall—with Lady Pamela’s budget of town scandal fresh in her recollection, this old-fashioned word “sensibility,” as applied to Miss Vivash, is too much for her. A woman of the world may listen with philosophic composure to an unworthy rival’s praise ; Jeanne is seventeen ! Indignation, vanity, quick shame, quicker jealousy, every honest emotion of her girlish heart may be read by him who runs. It takes a good many more than seventeen years to perfect human beings in that hardest of all hardly acquired virtues—magnanimity.

“Until to-night, Mr. Wolfgang, I have given you credit for a good amount of common sense. I have thought you a trifle tyrannical, perhaps, as to false quantities and shaky nominatives, but a man of sound judgment on the whole. I see you as you are” (successfully mimicking the tone of his former strictures on herself)—“a man open to sweet words, led by the first cajoling voice that flatters, like the rest.”

“Miss Vivash is too discriminating to waste sweet words on a fellow like me,” says Wolfgang, with a certain air of constraint — “flattering enough that Miss Vivash should bestow time on me at all, in the absence of worthier associates.”

"In the absence," says little Jeanne, turning her head aside, and playing a grand imaginary fantasia on the window-frame, "of—Lord Vauxhall, for instance."

The master watches her averted face—as much of it as can be seen in profile—narrowly.

"What nonsense is this you are talking?" he asks her, in a tone of real displeasure. "Who has been filling your head with such subjects? Lord Vauxhall's is not a name that I choose—you understand me, Jeanne, that I choose—to hear from your lips."

"But Lord Vauxhall is Miss Vivash's greatest friend, sir—think of that!—the friend of a girl full of fine, exalted feeling, romance, sensibility! His first wife managed to break her heart, I am told; his second one has the ill luck to be shut up in an asylum. But his manners are perfect; Lord Vauxhall takes his hat off with a better grace than any man in Europe; and as to his Twickenham dinners—"

"Lord Vauxhall's domestic history! Lord Vauxhall's Twickenham dinners!" exclaims Wolfgang hotly. "And pray what have you, a simple Black Forest maiden, to do with such things?"

Little Jeanne claps her hands; she dances with wary speed, beyond arm's reach of the master.

"I have been listening to improving town talk for a good many hours, Mr. Wolfgang. It may be

that I have a better memory for London scandal than I have for Latin verbs and propositions in Euclid. Lord Vauxhall" (dwelling with a child's perverse pleasure on the forbidden name) "is not unknown to you, it seems, by reputation? Did you ever, in the intervals of mathematical study, chance to hear of Mr. Samuel Chodd? Birmingham scissors-people, you know, weak as water about lords and honorables, and '*deliciously* apoplectic?' Samuel's papa married the Lady Ermengarde Vauxhall, and was considerate enough to die within a twelvemonth."

The master remains silent, his eyes fixed upon Jeanne's clear and guileless face. "You talk as though I were a dandy fresh, like your friend Sir Christopher, from Piccadilly," he remarks after a time—"I, a penniless, itinerant teacher, hawking such poor brains as I possess about the country-side, or settling myself for a few months in a neighborhood, as the charcoal-burners do, if I can get a little chance employment from my betters. Rich scissors-people—Lord Vauxhall—Lady Ermen-garde—I know just as much of such people as you knew yesterday, Fräulein Jeanne."

"Yesterday is not to-day, Mr. Wolfgang. I feel wiser" (her voice sinking a little), "ah! wiser by twenty years, than I did before our guests arrived."

"Too wise to come out for a last turn upon the terrace with me? The forest is overshadowed—

the owls have left off calling to each other. In ten minutes more yonder black cloud will have reached the moon. Will you come?"

"Yes" is in Jeanne's eyes—on her lips; the spirit of contradiction is at her heart. "Mam-selle Ange will want me in the guest-room, sir. I have no more time *to waste*. We are to have a grand reception to-night—the Herr Pastor and his wife, in addition to our English visitors—and perhaps the Frau Pastor will play us some dance-music, as she does at Christmas. I wonder" (with malicious show of interest) "if Sir Christopher Marlowe is too fine a gentleman to waltz?"

The master moves aside without answering; for a minute or more he watches the darkening western terrace—the terrace where five evenings ago little Jeanne told him Malva's history; where to-night he has played audience to the exalted feelings, the romance, the sensibility of Miss Vivash! When he looks around again his pupil is standing just within the open door, ready for flight.

"Mr. Wolfgang!"

"Jeanne!"

"You will not take it amiss if I relieve my conscience by giving you a word of warning?"

"How could I take amiss anything said or done by you?"

"Beware! beware!" sings the girl with mocking emphasis:

“ ‘ I know a maiden fair to see—
Take care !
She can both false and friendly be—
Beware ! ’ ”

With a quick flank movement Wolfgang makes for the singer ; but, ere he reaches the threshold, Jeanne has fled. Far away along the vaulted corridor he catches a glimpse of the little elf-like figure, hears the ringing echoes of her voice :

“ ‘ She gives thee a garland woven fair :
It is a fool’s cap for thee to wear—
Beware ! ’ ”

CHAPTER VIII.

PAINT, PATCHES, AND POWDER.

“ I SCORE a royal marriage, my best Frau Pastor, and make sure of my game.”

The guest-room wears a look of company unknown in Schloss Egmont since the long-buried days when princes and prime ministers were wont to kneel at the Countess Dolores’s feet. The chandeliers blaze with wax-lights ; the moth-fretted satin curtains, the scantily gilt chairs and consoles, the pastel court beauties, are looking their bravest ; and, in all the majesty of blue ribbon and many-colored flounces, Mamselle Ange conducts her reception.

"Village pastors and their wives did not get beyond the servants' hall," Ange will tell you confidentially, "in the time when German society was society. In these revolutionary days, what with Berlin regicides and Russian *annihilists*, no one knows where to draw the line."

Besides, has not the Frau Pastor helped one with the made dishes, and does not all the neighborhood know that the poor soul is respectably connected—a sixteenth, or thereabouts, of patrician blood on the maternal side, and related by marriage to the most noble Herr Oberkammermeister at the Residenz?

The pastor is a large square man, with large square feet, incased in village-made shoes, that fit them—a pastor with dingy linen, a high, vague forehead, a rugged voice, the manners of a Diogenes, and the heart of a little child! Like many another of his country's divines, Herr Pastor Meyer, during his thirty years of rural ministry, has struck up *liaison* after *liaison* with the passing philosophies of the day. The works of men who have for their motto, "*Il faut sabrer la théologie*," lie openly on his study-table. His sermons are filled by turns with the rationalistic affability of Schleiermacher, and the cloudy mysticism, leading nowhere, of the Hegelites. Such of his weekly hours as he can spare from his pigs and mangel-wurzel, are occupied over a ponderous book, still in manuscript, on the "Evolution of

Being out of not Being," or "The Blank at the Center of the Cosmos." He corresponds—'tis the innocent glory of his life to boast of it—with Haeckel, of Jena, and, to the scandal of Mamselle Ange, reads aloud the pamphlets of Büchner and Vogt—the popular "deifiers of matter"—with the same impartial gusto as he devours schinkenroh, sauerkraut, wurst, and pfannkuchen at his own tea-table.

The Frau Pastor is lean and wire-drawn as a metaphysical abstraction, the very converse of her spouse. It has been already said that the worthy pair visited Paris on their wedding-tour. Frau Meyer dresses still as the Paris world, seen by provincial eyes, dressed in 'fifty-five: hair, or remains of hair, brought low upon the cheeks, voluminous skirts, hanging sleeves, and a crinoline. The good Frau Pastor, whose age may just fall short of the half century, wears also a necklace of mock pearls, a plume of marabout-feathers, an artificial rose, spectacles, and a touch of rouge! Yes—on the honor of a faithful historian—spectacles and rouge!

Is not taste, as some broad thinkers aver of conscience, a matter of latitude and longitude?

A Parisian—her forty years well struck—gives a shrug of the shoulders over her dead youth, then buries it decently in a shroud of black lace (haunted by a just perceptible pathetic odor of patchouli), for evermore. A German wreathes

roses round the poor corpse's head, strings beads round its throat, bares its arms, smears a touch of red on its cheek-bone, and parades it boldly forth, in the glare of day, a distress to gods and men.

Does the Teuton woman or the Frank, pray, exhibit the more genuine philosophy?

"Yes, I score a royal marriage," cries Mamselle Ange, looking up from the card-table where she and the Frau Pastor are playing their accustomed game of six-and-sixty (the pastor, tired after his day's plowing, is sleeping the sleep of the just in an adjacent stiff-backed chair), "and I lead the king of trumps, six-and-sixty. This brings my score down to one."

Sir Christopher Marlowe, who is standing beside the card-players, assumes an air of liveliest interest.

"The game beats roulette and trente-et-quarante hollow. In the days when I used to addle my head over books of averages at Monaco, I saw no excitement to come up to it. Twenty for a royal marriage, eleven for an ace, six-and-sixty counts one; and the longer you play the lower you score.—Some morning, when you are at leisure, Miss Dempster," he turns appealingly to Jeanne, "I shall ask you to unriddle for me the mysteries of six-and-sixty."

Do you know the game, reader? I speak from knowledge, solid, concrete experience gained dur-

ing the lagging hours of many a German winter, when I call it the dreariest, lengthiest, hardest form of arithmetic that twisted human intelligence ever gilded over with the name of play. You start at a supposed score of nine ; you clutch at a visionary six-and-sixty which you perpetually fall short of or overstep ; you work back—through what interminable convolutions of kings, queens, and their marriages—to nothing ; and, when you are nothing, you have won ! Cards, they say, were invented for the amusement of a mad French king. For the delectation of what doubly mad German König or Kaiser could the heart of man have hit upon the dull, difficult, interminable set of combinations styled six-and-sixty ?

Mamselle Ange loves it with passion ; the intricate, backward-moving score, the crooked twists and turns, the airy inconclusiveness of every detail of the game, possessing, I doubt not, nice affinities with the constitution of her own mind.

“Whist and chess are played by rule,” she will say disdainfully. “They can be learned like a primer. At six-and-sixty you never know what is coming, or where you are ; and, as the winning-point is zero, your hopes are kept up to the last.”

Often have Ange and the Frau Pastor been known to seat themselves at a card-table by two o'clock of a December afternoon, and play at six-and-sixty, losing their temper and their pfennigs, alternately, till supper-time. Looking over their

hands on such occasions, it has sometimes seemed to Jeanne that neither opponent was strictly correct in her play. Extraneous circumstances, however—the waning light, the drifting snow against the window-frame, the howling of the north wind in the forests—may have been to blame. And if there had been no little errors, where had been the disputes—the human element, the very salt and savor of the game?

“Yes, Jeanne can teach you the rudiments, Sir Christopher, although she is but a spiritless player. Jeanne knows the rules of six-and-sixty as well as I do. And perhaps,” says Ange, “you might induce Miss Vivash to join you” (glancing across at the sofa on which Beauty is talking, in low whispers, with practiced slow smiles, to Wolfgang—Lady Pamela, in her due position as chaperon, at their side). “By starting from eighteen, instead of nine, it could be turned into an exceedingly pretty *parti* for three, though of course the counting would be more complicated.”

“A game for three,” muses Sir Christopher, “to be played by Jeanne Dempster, Vivian Vivash, and Kit Marlowe! An exceedingly pretty *parti*; with a complicated reckoning, and Herr Wolfgang left in the cold.—Jeanne, my dear” (in a tone of sudden mock alarm), “we must take care of our peace of mind, in earnest. I am not a bad-looking fellow if the popular voice may be believed; and you—”

Sir Christopher's words sink into a whisper ; Jeanne's telltale face blushes and dimples ; and Beauty, who has not ceased to watch them through half-closed eyelids, changes color. The defalcation of the least among her slaves, of the coldest among her discarded suitors, causes this woman pain more keen, it may be, than the pangs of worthy love. So nicely does Nature adjust the measure of suffering to our individual temperaments.

"Come hither, Jeanne," she cries, turning away brusquely from Wolfgang.—"You too, Sir Christopher. We are holding a council of war, Mr. Wolfgang and I—discussing the possibility of diverting ourselves, in this benighted place, until our host's arrival. The question is, What shall our diversion be?—Pamela, my dear, suppose you wake up sufficiently to vouchsafe an opinion."

"My opinion is in favor of skittles," says Lady Pamela, lazily unclosing a pair of sleepy eyes. "There is a capital alley in the garden—a Kegelbahn, as the classic vernacular of the country has it."

"You will never find a better game than six-and-sixty," cries Ange, "and I believe, with a little calculation, it could easily be turned into a round game. We might invite over the honorable Fräuleins from Katzenellenbogen some afternoon, drink our coffee on the terrace, and—"

"I mean to get up theatricals," interrupts Vivian, with the rudeness upon which competent judges have set the seal of approval. "My darling Princess gave me *carte blanche* to turn Schloss Egmont inside out, from turret to foundation-stone, and I intend to do so. 'No audience,' do I hear some malcontent remark? We will send invitations to every visitable person in the duchy of Baden.—There is a cavalry depot, you say, at Freiburg, Mr. Wolfgang? Then there are their Brummagen Highnesses at the Residenz." Ange glances ceilingward, as though to avert Heaven's wrath at the profanity. "And if the worst came to the worst" (drawing up her white throat), "one might order over spectators from London. 'First nights we attend, but never unbend,' of course. Still, a bored detachment from the Crutch and Toothpick Brigade would be better than nothing. We can get our dresses from England in three days, and we will fix the performance for the evening of Count von Egmont's return."

Vivian is really animated. A flush suffuses the dead whiteness of her skin; life comes into her pale eyes. At this moment you could imagine what she would be—*not* in the presence of the one man who loved her, unless, indeed, that man's hands were filled with diamonds—but before a crowd of worshipers mobbed in the park of a Sunday, the cynosure of all eyes in an exhibition-room beneath her own portrait. Publicity of some

kind, of any kind, is a vital condition to her moral ozone, without which she can scarcely draw breath. Even at the project of theatricals in this dull old German house, before a visionary audience, the soul in her—I cancel the expression, the leading passion in her—awakens, and with it her beauty. She glances amicably at the different faces round the room—on Wolfgang she looks as, surely, no woman so courted, so handsome, has ever looked yet.

“A count in the hand,” according to Lady Pamela’s dictum, “is worth a Chodd in the bush.”

A poor professor in the hand, it would seem, is not too lowly for this siren’s favors in default of worthier worshipers—or victims, as the case may be.

“Private theatricals! Paint, patches, and powder!” cries Sir Christopher, with a groan. “Don’t have ‘Delicate Ground,’ and don’t have ‘The School for Scandal,’ Miss Vivash. I have played Charles Surface four times this season, and absolutely refuse to drink bumpers to the peerless Maria, or bring my ancestors to the hammer any more.”

“And I refuse all old women’s parts,” cries Lady Pamela, waking up in earnest. “Yes, Vivian, dearest, I refuse. ‘I do them so well—efface myself so admirably—show such an artistic spirit, such want of vanity, in making up for the character.’ Yes, I know—I hear your good-na-

tured compliments beforehand ; but I am modest, and refuse. I do not intend to have my head turned anent my incomparable old women any more."

"If I am positively wanted—behold me!" says Wolfgang. "How could I disobey any order given by Miss Vivash's lips? But I must be looked upon strictly as a super ; a 'Walking Gentleman, or 'Enter servant with candles.' My Anglo-Saxon is not of a quality for airing in public. My *B*'s and *P*'s"—with a cutting glance at Jeanne—"are altogether inadmissible for an English hero."

"Things look deliciously theatrical already," cries Vivian, still in high good humor. "Every actor discontented with his part even before his part is assigned to him. Sir Christopher Marlowe will delight no fresh audiences with his genial humor as the prince of spendthrifts ; Lady Pamela Lawless refuses to hide her charms under wrinkles and whitewash."

An outside observer might cavil at this allusion to the personal endowments of Lady Pamela, than whom a plainer woman never breathed ; but, as I have already said, the affection between the two friends is of material too delicate for rough-and-ready analysis.

"Mr. Wolfgang is afraid of his *B*'s and *P*'s ; I myself am the only well-disposed member of the troupe—consequently the only one whose de-

cisions shall be final ! We will act 'The Maid of Honor.' ”

Miss Vivash leans back on the sofa, as much as is possible to lean on any piece of furniture in Schloss Egmont, and, folding her finely-cut arms, complacently begins to recite aloud :

“ ‘Can he guess that I love him, or have I been betrayed ? I may avow that, were I disposed to bestow my hand on a gentleman of birth and breeding, I should consult only my own pleasure in the act.’ ”

“The Maid of Honor” is a little one-act comedy, in which, as theatre-going people know, Vivian, during the past season, has won laurels. Have not royal hands thrown her bouquets after its performance ? Have not newspaper critics pronounced her to be an amateur O’Neil, a younger Déjazet—the bolder of the prints going as far as to hint that ’twere pity Miss Vivash’s histrionic genius should not, like the beauty of her face, outstep the limits of mere amateur fame ?

“And you, Miss Dempster,” she goes on, turning to Jeanne, “would like to take a part, doubtless ? Well, we will try to find something for you. The character of Laura, *alias* Cesario, with the points cut out, might be made to suit—might it not, Pamela ? ”

“I act Cesario myself, or I act nothing,” says Lady Pamela. “Where is the good of possessing an hussar’s dress if one may not bring it in,

spurs, boots, and all? You take the Duchess, of course. Jeanne must be the Maid of Honor. With her eyes, and her blushes, and her seventeen years, Jeanne will look the *ingénue* to perfection."

Vivian's pale glance travels slowly downward from the girl's face to her feet, then up again. Jeanne can feel the coral beads scorching once more into her throat. Once more she is conscious of her over-short sleeves, her over-broad shoes—of every inartistic, provincial item in her whole dress.

"Unfortunately, one has one's ideals! Lady Blanche Plantagenet acted with me last in Lady Clearwell's troupe, at Brighton, if you remember. Alas! that was when we first got our name of 'The Incomparables.' I can not think of 'The Maid of Honor' without thinking of dearest Blanche and her charming talent. No doubt Miss Dempster would be willing to do her best, and Evans could improvise some kind of dress that might pass as *poudré* for her; still—"

"Blanche Plantagenet is the ugliest woman in England, and thirty-three," remarks Sir Christopher innocently. "True bill, Miss Vivash—matter of history. All the Plantagenets are as ugly as sin—no, as virtue. Some one help me with a metaphor. And as to her age, is it not recorded in the book? In the interest of art, for our credit among the Teutons, I hope, if this play comes off,

Fräulein Jeanne will look as much like herself, and as little like Lady Blanche Plantagenet, as possible."

"If there is any talk of theatricals," cries Ange, prudently covering her cards from her opponent as she glances round at the group of young people—"Jeanne, child, if Miss Vivash decides upon turning us out, from garret to basement, with play-acting, there will be no need to get over dresses from London. The Von Egmonts, time out of mind, have been merry-andrews (I am pleased to see that my poor wit so diverts you, Mr. Wolfgang), harlequins, poets, painters, play-actors! We have tinsel rubbish enough in the Fürstenzimmer alone to supply half the theatres in Germany. Theatricals!" muses Ange, her face growing overcast. "Ay, we were in the middle of theatricals when Dolores's death fell upon us. Paul and Salome were in their beds—for children were children in those days—and their mother had paint on her cheeks and roses in her powdered hair, ready to enter on the scene, when, in a moment, as all the doctors had foretold, she sank dead.—Jeanne, if Miss Vivash and her friends desire, you will show them the masquerading clothes of Dolores von Egmont just as they lie, heap above heap, in the Fürstenzimmer."

But Jeanne, ere half the tale is told, has made her exit, stealthily, from the guest-room.

CHAPTER IX.

A VILLAGE MARCHIONESS.

A SUDDEN revulsion of feeling has seized the girl ; an awakening of vanity, dormant in her simple heart until to-day ; a burning desire to get rid of her beads, her shoes, her plaits, and appear, at all costs, as an equal, a human creature of the same flesh and blood as Vivian, in Wolfgang's sight !

The entrance-hall, the vaulted corridors of Schloss Egmont are silent, shadowed. By such faint light as the casements, few and far between, admit, Jeanne flies swiftly up one flight of stairs, down another, up a third ; then along a very labyrinth of winding passages to the Fürstenzimmer—a lumber-room now ; in days of former Von Egmont splendor, the state or princely apartment of the house.

Legless chairs and tables, Flemish tapestries amid whose fine fabric successive generations of moths have ever run, the remains of Sèvres and Dresden hopelessly shattered, yet of quality so rare 'twould be a sin to throw them away ; the shell of a hundred-year-old spinnet ; some pathetically tarnished toys—all the *disjecta membra* of the forsaken, masterless house are here.

Groping along from one dust-covered land-

mark to another, Jeanne makes her way to a bureau, large enough for a modern dressing-room, in which the theatrical properties of the Countess Dolores, dead more than a quarter of a century ago, are stored. Jeanne Dempster knows these properties by heart. Bleeding nuns, Spanish duennas, French marquises, she can lay her hand, unerringly, upon the buskin or the sock, the fitting garb for comedy or tragedy, at will. The adjuncts, even to the smallest detail, are not wanting. On an upper shelf stands a mahogany dressing-case massive as a plate-chest, metal-cornered, with the initials of the Countess Dolores worked in silver on the lid. In this are ranged hair-powder, patches, paint ; scent-bottles from which the sweetness has not quite evaporated ; a needle, even, threaded with faded silk ; an artificial rose-bud, to have been worn, perchance, on that last night when, amid music, dancing, masking, the final curtain went down, with a run, upon the Countess Dolores's life !

Under common circumstances little Jeanne would have held this dressing-case sacred. Scores of times she has looked over its disordered contents, but fearfully, shrinkingly, with the coward's courage, the ghostly creepings of the flesh which children of a certain temperament shrink from, yet court. Vanity, however, like these fathers of families, is capable of all. Aided by the moon, that just now shines fitfully through a rift of

inky cloud, she selects a Louis Quinze costume that suits her fancy ; then, bearing the dressing-box in her arms, dances away to her own room, lightsome as any little moon-sprite of the Wald, to dress. To dress ! April-cheeked reader of seventeen, looking forward to your first breakfast, opera, ball, your first appearance in any guise upon the platform of life's great comedy—you know the meaning of the word !

And the costume is rigidly accurate. In these days of imitation and veneer, we smack of Manchester ever in our travesties ; our velvets are cotton-backed, our brocaded Pompadours calico. Our forebears carried a kind of conscience into their very follies, did their pleasures on a solider scale than we have heart for. The uplooped tunic is of blue-and-silver damask, the product doubtless of some Spanish loom, brought originally to Schloss Egmont in the young bride's trousseau. Richest Valencia lace sets off the throat and sleeves. The clocked silk stockings, high-heeled shoes, embroidered Castilian fan—all in their way are artistic, all are genuine.

Hastily lighting the candles on her dressing-table (homely Black Forest "dips" ; there is not an item of needless extravagance in Ange's house-keeping), Jeanne sets to work on her own transformation ; snatching a fearful joy as every moment brings her nearer to possible rivalry, divides her, by a wider gulf, from the Jeanne she knows.

Hastily she piles up her plenteous locks, in a fashion learned from pastel court-goddesses, above her forehead. She powders, she rouges ; puts on a couple of patches ; exercises herself a short space over the furling and unfurling of her fan before the glass ; then, ere courage has had time to cool, runs down, with step as hurried as the perilous nature of her head-gear allows, toward the guest-room.

Ruddy-cheeked Elspeth, meeting the little figure unexpectedly in a half-lit corridor, screeches aloud, drops on her knees, and signs herself with the sign of the cross. A peasant, reared among the demon-haunted valleys of the Black Forest, looks upon apparitions as among the common facts of life. In a house turned upside down by London ladies, their lovers and their maids, what can be simpler to Elspeth's mind than that the ghost of some poor Edelfrau should walk perturbed ! As Jeanne catches a vision of rouged and powdered marchionesses reflected in perspective from the paneled steel mirrors that line the hall, her own heart begins to beat uncomfortably. When she reaches the door of the guest-room she stops short, uncertain—yes, after her fingers touch the lock—whether to enter or fly. Elspeth's emotion is scarcely a test of the effect she may produce upon an educated audience. She may be unlike Jeanne Dempster, yet neither beautiful nor artistic. How if Vivian, by a glance, should cover

her with ridicule—if she should see cool disgust on Wolfgang's face !

As Jeanne hesitates, Fate, in the person of Sir Christopher, cuts off the possibility of retreat. Sir Christopher, suddenly unclosing the door of the guest-room, sees, recognizes her.

“Lady Teazle !” he exclaims, taking possession of both the girl's little cold hands—“Lady Teazle, by all that's wonderful !” Then leads her straight under the fullest light of the chandeliers—leads her, blushing, shrinking (yet with a child's arch vanity showing delightfully through her paint, through her shyness), into the presence of them all.

And the expression of Wolfgang's face is not one of disgust ! Thus much Jeanne feels rather than sees, as she stands, Sir Christopher still doing showman, with every eye fixed upon her, every tongue criticising her transformation.

“Ausgezeichnete ! Wunderschöne !” exclaim the good Herr Pastor and his Frau in chorus.

“Wunderschöne !” repeats the master, in a lower key.

“Wonder Jane—certainly !” echoes Sir Christopher. “Janet, the wonder of the world. All languages are intelligible when the text of the sermon is a woman's beauty.”

Beauty ! At the word, Miss Vivash rises to her feet. Then, adjusting her *pince-nez*, that lawful recognized weapon of impertinence, she bestows

a stare of cold curiosity upon Jeanne Dempster's shrinking figure.

"Quite too amusing, really, if one were going to get up the sort of thing—charades—fairy stories—transformation of the Ugly Duckling! Unfortunately, my talents do not lie in the direction of burlesque."

"A delicious bit of porcelain," cries Lady Pamela, with her off-hand good nature.—"Sir Christopher, pray put yourself in a fitting attitude as pendant.

'They are only Dresden China fair,
That little He and She.' "

Sir Christopher, laying his hand upon his heart, declares he has been to fancy balls, to private theatricals, to every folly of the kind the season has produced, *ad nauseam*; yet, after all, has had to come to the Black Forest to see how charming a really pretty girl can look, *poudrée*—dashed if he has not!

Miss Vivash drops him a stately courtesy. If a look could kill, Sir Christopher's harmless span of existence must, on the instant, come to sudden end.

"We accept the compliment, literally! Sir Christopher Marlowe has been this season *ad nauseam* to fancy balls, at which *we* have given him dances; has acted this season *ad nauseam* in private theatricals with *us*! And now Sir

Christopher Marlowe has come to the Black Forest to see how well a really pretty girl can look, *poudrée*—dashed if she has not ! ”

“Remarks made on the subject of rush-lights can not include the sun,” says Sir Christopher with grave gallantry. “Perfection has no rivals.”

“You have given utterance to a very elegant sentiment, sir,” cries Ange, warming at the mere ring of a copy-book aphorism. “When I was young, I always said we commonplace girls had more to dread from each other than we had from the toasts—they called the beauties ‘toasts’ in those days, Miss Vivash. Now, there was a connection of my own, quite a celebrity, a Miss Carlton Jarvis—”

“No, we are not going to act a burlesque,” interrupts Miss Vivash, with her fine, native breeding. “So I fear our village marchioness must be pronounced out of court. If we require Miss Dempster’s talents at the last, Evans, my maid, can run her up a suitable dress in a couple of hours.”

She moves a contemptuous step or two away ; then, pausing, glances back across her shoulder at Wolfgang. If you have ever employed idle moments, reader, by gazing into the London photographers’ windows, the Vivian glance, the Vivian shoulder, must alike be familiar to you.

“You possess the delightful talent of *not* singing, I think, Mr. Wolfgang ? ” (Beauty’s imita-

tion of the class of Vere de Vere is one of the most diverting caricatures extant to him who has a humorously disposed soul. She drawls, droops her eyelids, raises her brows ; is familiar, chilling, impertinent by turns ; and succeeds—much as Goldsmith's town madams succeeded when they swam, sprawled, languished, frisked, in vain rivalry of Olivia Primrose's natural grace and high spirits.) “ Well, if you do not sing, you can play a waltz, surely, or whistle one. Of course you never heard Lord Albert de Montmorenci whistle dance-music ? How should you ? Something must positively be done to hinder one from falling asleep.”

“ When der young beebles might waltz, so play I, ach, my Gott, yes ! ” cries good Frau Meyer, bustling across to the instrument. “ Herr Professor Wolfgang, I invite you, in ze Fräulein's name, for von tanz.”

The Frau Meyer's dance-music dates from an even earlier year than her hair-dressing. She thunders forth Strauss's “ First Set,” the “ Original Polka,” and the “ Elfin Waltzes,” with a will, the Herr Pastor performing an *ad libitum* drum accompaniment with his feet. Her time, however, is good ; the guest-room floor is waxed and polished to a nicety. Ere a couple of minutes have sped, chairs and tables are pushed aside, and little Jeanne, with Sir Christopher's arm round her waist, is whirling wildly through space.

Lady Pamela, who seems accustomed to play fifth wheel in the coach, chats with Ange in a corner. The Beauty and Herr Wolfgang stand side by side near the piano. .

“I have come to the Black Forest to see a really pretty girl, *poudrée*, and I have come to the Black Forest to get a really good waltz.” So runs an insidious whisper of Kit Marlowe’s as he and Jeanne make their first pause for breath. “The moralists account it among my sins that I turn life into one long joke—a joke, so they say, without a point. Jeanne” (tenderly), “I will make you a confession. I should be quite content to turn life into one long waltz with you for my partner.”

“Frau Meyer for ever playing the ‘Elfin Waltzes,’ the Herr Pastor for ever beating time with his Sunday shoes. What an earthly paradise !”

“Our Beauty, our Hyde Park goddess, waltzes as she does everything—divinely,” muses Sir Christopher, giving a glance across the room at Vivian. “If ever you come to London, little Jeanne, if you are lucky enough to penetrate to the very heart and bull’s-eye of fashion, you may witness a refined aristocracy struggling together—elderly earls treading on each other’s toes, dowager duchesses balancing their sixteen stone on rickety ball-room chairs—in vain efforts to behold Miss Vivash dance. These things are above my head. As a

plain, humble-minded man, I feel that I could in the main be content with lowlier excellence. A lily-of-the-valley, a violet by a mossy stone—a Black Forest brier-rose—”

They have by this time moved a few steps nearer to the piano, and Jeanne can hear Miss Vivash's voice. In her eagerness to catch Wolfgang's answer the girl forgets to listen to the end of Sir Christopher Marlowe's flowery compliments.

“It is quite nonsense for you to refuse me! As if a German could be out of practice in waltzing! Come, Mr. Wolfgang, make no more vain excuses. I am not in the habit of going on my knees, I can tell you.”

(“On her knees!” repeats Sir Christopher, *sotto voce*. “No; that is a charge her worst detractors would scarcely bring against our Beauty!”)

“I give you a last chance. Make up your mind to accept or refuse me before I count five. One, two, three—”

And Wolfgang's arm encircles the wasp-like waist.

Vivian pauses for a moment before starting; not noticing Jeanne, not noticing an opposite mirror hung at such an angle that the master can see therein the reflection of her own face, she pauses, gives a meaning glance across at Lady Pamela, the tip of her nose pointing heavenward; then

with her morsel of a lace handkerchief dispels some imaginary dust from Wolfgang's threadbare coat-sleeve before resting her hand upon his arm.

Brief is the contemptuous action, quickly followed by dulcet whispers, by goddess smiles. But the master has seen it ; and Jeanne—ah, how the child's heart throbs, how her blood boils at the sight ! Is Wolfgang so much of a philosopher, she asks herself, so infatuated, so dead already to self-respect, as to let this insult to his poverty pass by unnoticed ?

Miss Vivash's waltzing is the perfection of trained art. More spontaneous grace, more poetry of movement, you will see exhibited at any village festival among the Black Forest peasant-maidens. But grace, poetry, may not be the qualifications most in vogue in London ball-rooms. During a pair of seasons Vivian has been forced, as fifty years ago Lord Byron worded it, to "waltz for a living." Her sinuous, gliding movements, her pose of head and shoulders, are, I doubt not, in accordance with modern æsthetic taste, a simple case of supply meeting demand : who shall cavil at them ?

"Miss Vivash deserves the *salon* to herself," says Jeanne, drawing back gravely from Sir Christopher's side. "It is well for me to take a lesson, well to see how goddesses—I mean how people who go to court-balls—hold up their trains."

"You have no train to hold," answers Kit Marlowe; "and, while you live, you will never be a goddess. Rein in your ambition, little Jeanne," he adds. "Goddesses are articles of luxury—articles whose manufacture costs over-dear in the nineteenth century, take my word for it."

Miss Vivash swims languidly round the room twice, exertion enough, doubtless, with such a partner, before such spectators; then, sinking in an attitude that artists of a certain school have told her is "classic" on the sofa, she lifts her eyes, a sleepy fire in their pale depths, full upon the master.

"You have not often in your life danced a waltz like that, Mr. Wolfgang?"

The words are nothing. The manner is that of a queen who, having bestowed some hazardously great favor on a subject, would fain recall him by a glance, a tone, to a sense of the gulf that lies between them.

"I have danced few waltzes of any kind," answers Wolfgang, with humility, "and such partners as have taken pity on me have, in general, been Bauer-mädchen. Confess, Miss Vivash, you find my step barbarously German, do you not?"

"Barbarously German!" repeats Vivian, with her little laugh, prettily learned, coming from no region near the heart. "We are accustomed, at court, I can assure you, to partners of every nation in Europe, to Germans most of all, naturally—

from our family connections. Indeed, among the tip-top classes of society, nationalities do not exist. Everybody waltzes alike."

As Vivian speaks, Wolfgang reviews her charms impartially: the soulless brow, the pale, voluptuous eyes, the studied abandonment of posture and limb. Then he glances across the room at the Ugly Duckling, at the transparent, primrose face of little Jeanne. It is in moments seemingly trivial as this one that men's fates are decided for them.

"And you will pay me no compliments, Miss Vivash? I can not aspire to be compared with court-partners of the tip-top classes of society, but you might, at least, raise my hopes by telling me I have not trodden on your toes or torn your gown."

"I invite you for the first waltz on the evening of our theatricals, Mr. Wolfgang. Does that give you hope sufficient?"

"Just sufficient to keep me alive in the interval," says Wolfgang, with emphasis.

And Vivian hides her face away behind her fan. It is the nearest approach ever made by the Hyde Park goddess to blushing.

CHAPTER X.

HERE, OR ELSEWHERE.

ST. ULRICH's clock has struck twelve ere Jeanne and the housekeeper start on their nocturnal mission of seeing that "all is safe": an empty form, gone through by Ange at every season of the year with stoic, albeit fruitless, punctuality. They try kitchen-windows, faithfully barred hours ago by Hans and Elspeth; they shake casement windows, which opened at their widest could not admit a child of six; they look behind impossible screens, they set in order wires that, in case of burglarious attack, would, it is supposed by the faithful, communicate with a bell in Ange's chamber. And then they turn their attention to the front door, left wide open at the time of Wolfgang's arrival, and through which a dozen robbers abreast might at any moment of the evening have invaded Schloss Egmont, had they listed.

"Yes, yes," says Ange, giving abrupt utterance to some distant train of mental speculation, "there is a screw loose about that master of yours, child. He has not the manners of his station, or the modesty either—the modesty, that is to say, that once belonged to the lower classes; and, if this kind of thing goes on much longer, I shall think it right . . . Heaven save and protect us, Jeanne—a man!"

Ange sinks shivering and panting against the first support that presents itself (Ange, who has always declared herself to be, on an emergency, worth a regiment of soldiers, who has a hundred stories to tell of her own presence of mind, her own desperate valor at different past crises of life). That support is Mr. Wolfgang's arms.

"I was just smoking my last cigar in the dark," he remarks, quietly depositing Ange and her emotions on a bench that stands outside the door.— "Have you noticed the summer lightnings, *Fräulein Jeanne*? Watch them for a minute, here with me. Even for the Black Forest the effects of sudden silver and purple are something magic."

During the last couple of hours heaven's face has grown overclouded. It is warm as noon ; intensely dark, save where, ever and anon, a fire-fly's transitory metallic radiance flashes through the gloom. Not a vibration of sound is there in air or on earth. Not a fir-needle throughout the vast expanse of neighboring forests seems to stir.

As Wolfgang speaks, comes a sudden pulsating flood of white light, enabling him and his companion to discern every familiar object around—the stiff juniper-hedges of the garden, the moat, the bridge, far away, the granite, fir-girt summits of the *Blauen Mountains*—with dazzling clearness. Then again sinks down a darkness that can be felt, the sickly ray from Ange's lantern alone enabling them to discern each other's faces ; and then, after

a pause, during which neither master nor pupil speaks, comes another break of light, longer, more exquisitely heaven-clear, than the last.

"It is a night when one should be abroad in the forest," says Wolfgang, inhaling a mighty draught of air—cool, sparkling air, freshly drawn from the cisterns of midnight. "Often, as a boy, have I spent the hours from midnight to sunrise watching such lightnings as these."

"Here, in the valley of the Höllenthal?" Jeanne asks him, startled.

"Here—or elsewhere. What matter longitude and latitude? Nature is the same, whether you look at her among Black Forest firs or the olive and ilex groves of the Alban Hills."

"It is a great deal too late for honest folk to be out of their beds," remarks Ange, establishing herself well within the door. "You have a long walk still before you, Mr. Wolfgang, and, if you take my advice, will lose no time in starting.—Jeanne, my dear, come in. We wish Mr. Wolfgang, do we not, a very good night?"

Ange's figure is looking more grotesquely rebellious to the laws of gravitation than usual. It is said that M. Doré gets suggestions for outlines from the shadows cast by morsels of crumpled paper on a sunlit floor. The profile of Ange's figure at this moment might, assuredly, hint forth any number of weird combinations to an imaginative mind. Her cap, her curls, have suffered

during her quasi-faint; the flounces of her company silk bristle forth, fantastically irregular.

Little Jeanne notes a quick smile cross Wolfgang's face.

"What! Do you consider this a fitting hour for me to start across the mountains?" he begins good-humoredly.

"I consider nothing at all about fitting or not fitting, sir. The last train passed St. Ulrich at eight. When you missed that train you must have known your only alternative was to walk. Jeanne, come in."

The girl obeys, lingeringly. At the same moment Wolfgang makes a strategic backward movement that enables him to plant one foot within the threshold of Schloss Egmont.

"I must throw myself on your compassion, Mamselle Ange," he remarks boldly. "For tonight, such fraction of night as remains between this and dawn, I ask your hospitality."

"Mr. Wolfgang—sir! the servants have gone to rest—every habitable room in the Schloss is full." A look of absolute ludicrous terror is on Ange's face, the lamp in her hand trembles. "I have been here over thirty years," she goes on in a hollow voice, "and I never was placed in such a false position yet. You can walk down to St. Ulrich, surely? Make your way to the Bahnhof, knock up the station people—"

"And be taken for an escaped socialist," inter-

rupts the master, "rewarded with a revolver-shot for my pains. In these days of fraternal equality one does not care to run risks toward the small hours of the morning."

Ange's cheeks turn green. She is a woman deeply read in police history, and on the instant (so she afterward makes confession) the heroes of a dozen stories of midnight violence rise, red-handed, before her vision. What does she know of this *soi-disant* master, or of his antecedents? Who should answer for his intentions? What were the occupants of the Schloss—a handful of women, a servant-lad, a London dandy—if it came to a conflict with a band of *annihilist* desperadoes, armed to the teeth?

"My best Mamselle Ange," says Wolfgang, in the tone of easy command that, despite his sordid surroundings, so well becomes him, "I respect your scruples. You are the guardian of Schloss Egmont, and you shrink, naturally, from affording shelter at midnight to questionable characters."

"To questionable characters!" repeats Jeanne Dempster indignantly.

"But it is possible for you to perform an act of charity with circumspection. Put me in Paul's study. By locking a couple of inner doors you can shut me completely off from the rest of the house. I shall depart through the window by daybreak, and the only thing I could possibly

carry away with me would be young Von Egmont's portrait."

Ange has no choice but to consent. Wolfgang assists in barring the front door. As they pass the bottom of the staircase he holds out his hand to Turk the mastiff (gray and toothless now, but who for more than a dozen years has been the protector of Schloss Egmont). The dog crouches and licks it.

"And still, Jeanne, still, I mistrust the man," says Ange, when a few minutes later her lantern is feebly piercing the gloom of an upper staircase; Wolfgang safely imprisoned, according to his own suggestion, in the oak study. "Turk's instinct? Oh, half the robberies going are brought about through the connivance of house-dogs. Mr. Wolfgang is not what he seems! Even Frau Pastor Meyer—and she has traveled about the world—I won't talk of her breeding, but she is a pious woman, versed in the depravity of our fallen nature—even the Frau Pastor noticed the fineness of his linen. What should a Latin master do with cambric fronts? Why, his laundress's bill alone must eat up half his earnings. Take my word for it, child, when Count Paul returns, Mr. Wolfgang's day will be over. There will not be room for them both under the roof of Schloss Egmont."

At which prophecy Jeanne Dempster holds her peace.

CHAPTER XI.

A HEART.

“HEROES,” says the proverb, “are not heroes to their valets.” Goddesses, if one may generalize from a solitary example, are in no wise goddesses to their female friends.

In other classes, other manners. Had Vivian been born, as Beauties used to be, in the purple of notoriety, she might have bowed more gracefully to her honors, have submitted with finer self-respect to her dethronement. Beauty, at one time, was a good deal a matter of family connection. There were certain houses in which a complexion, a throat, a line of feature, were held to be hereditary. The future “toast” knew over what kingdom she should hold sway before she left the nursery ; was trained to rule, rather than conquer, in the schoolroom—grew accustomed to bear a crown, even before her slender shoulders were adequate to the weight.

Vivian is a usurper. Partly by accident, partly by sheer self-assertion, not a little—so froward is the æsthetic taste of over-civilized man—through the fact that she is *not* beautiful, has she won her perilous way to greatness whereunto she was not born ; and her success, of its very nature, has hardened, vulgarized her.

She was elected a beauty—ah, that bitter past tense!—by so powerful a clique, had backers in places so high, that mothers the most watchful, wives the most circumspect, were forced to inscribe her on their visiting list. “An outsider, a photograph celebrity—the talk of the clubs—the Folly of the moment”—these, and other harder names, the members of her own sex who loved her not might bestow upon Lord Vauxhall’s Invention. They could not, dared not, while her star was still in the ascendant, exclude her from their houses.

From their houses—no. But is there any law, written or unwritten, forbidding a hostess to chill as she courtesies, to stab as she smiles?

Patricia may be forced to admit the Folly of the moment to her ballroom, yet will make that Folly feel, as only Patricias can, over what kind of volcano her satin-slippered plebeian feet trip so lightly.

What exquisite slights, what finished, well-dred insults must not poor Beauty have submitted to from women, even before the slackening homage of men warned her that the hour of her downfall drew near! How bitterly and oft must she have counted up the gains, the losses, that celebrity had cost her! What visions must have darkened her pillow of the future, hourly becoming more certain, when the fiat of humiliation should have gone forth, and another Lord Vaux-

hall have invented another Vivian, or another batch of Vivians—is not imitation the Nemesis of notoriety?—for the admiration of the town!

Miss Vivash's success, I repeat, of its very nature, has hardened, vulgarized her. It has done more. It has taken away every wholesome, simple taste of life from her feverish palate. Lady Pamela Lawless, butterfly though she be, has a thousand ways, more or less wise, of massacring time. Lady Pamela is a good walker, a not unintelligent observer of men and things, finds genuine pleasure in every kind of outdoor sport—even in the Kegelbahn! Lady Pamela, ere four-and-twenty hours go by, has settled down with perfect resignation to her fortnight's dose of Schloss Egmont—and the society of Sir Christopher Marlowe.

To poor Beauty all is barren from Dan to Beersheba; the world, in very truth, a doll stuffed with straw, save where the complexion, the slaves, the parasols, the bonnets of Vivian Vivash are concerned.

She detests all that the country yields with a detestation worthy of Miss Kilmansegg. Her ankles are too weak for these horrible hilly walks that surround Schloss Egmont. The smell of the pine-forests is like a benzene-lamp, reminds her of cleaned gloves, of village tea-parties. She is convinced the sun, should she rashly venture in it, would bring on an apoplexy. During the season

she was strong enough to waltz for four or five hours every night of her life ; to pass her mornings on the historic walking gray, in the Row ; to spend her afternoons in shopping or driving, to dine out seven consecutive days in each week, and generally attend all the races, four-in-hand meetings, Twickenham dinners, and garden-parties going.

But, then, this was *in London* !

There is something really pathetic in the persistency with which her thoughts center on the London she has left, the London which, it would seem, continues to drive, dine, dance—to worship, even, at the shrine of new goddesses, in her absence !

“The whole Beauty question wants ventilating,” Lady Pamela will tell her consolingly. “See how much more fairly things are managed on the turf ! Every new Beauty ought to be heavily handicapped (a committee of dowagers might decide upon the penalties and allowances), and a first favorite, when her day is over, be provided for by act of Parliament.”

“A first favorite had better be pensioned off at the end of one season.” Thus Vivian, with a bitter laugh. “Three months is long enough for such a reign. I ought to have had small-pox, or have died, or married, a twelvemonth ago.”

“You would, in that case, have possessed ex-

actly a twelvemonth's less bracelets, my dear," answers Lady Pamela calmly.

Bracelets! Listening to the two friends, as they discuss this ever-fresh theme, one would think that human life, with all its complex measure of joy and pain, could be computed by jewelry.

Ovid, wise with the wisdom of his generation, remarks that certain Roman ladies had birthdays as often as it suited them. Martial, in an epigram, reproaches Silva with celebrating eight of these festivities yearly. A modern London beauty, in the matter of presents, if in nothing else, throws the ladies of old Rome into the shade. Quite coolly, Jeanne and Mamselle Ange listening, will Vivian talk of the diamond ring sent her by Prince This, or the pearl and ruby bracelet presented to her by the Duke of That. Her horse, her riding-habit, the opera-tickets, the yachting tours of Lady Pamela and herself, have been obtained free of cost. "Doubtful," so the Beauty playfully declares, "if we have paid our own grocers' bills." As for Mr. Chodd—his gifts, not returned, it would seem, at the rupture of the engagement, must have been legion. Trinkets, silks, laces, all the costliest items in Vivian's possession are spoken of as Samuel's choice, Samuel's fairing, dear good Samuel's latest peace-offering, *u. s. w.* If he was thus amenable to reason as a suitor, what might not consistently have been hoped from Mr. Chodd as a husband!

The loss of her quondam lover occasions Vivian more fond regret than a surface observer might give her credit for. On the third morning after the London visitors' arrival, Jeanne, stopping before the open door of the improvised "boudoir," discovers poor Beauty in tears ; such innocuous tears as may on occasion give safe relief to temper, yet not endanger one's eyelashes or mar one's complexion. It is an art, a science in itself, this knowing how and when to weep.

Everything in the outdoor world is joyous to-day. A brisk north wind, with a refreshing sense of coming autumn in its breath, stirs among the forests ; the sun shines with godlike fervor on the distant Blauen tops ; he shines, with purple sweetness, in the hearts of Mamselle Ange's roses. The burn trills out a never-ending song without words as it runs onward, onward, over its bed of moss and stone, toward the Rhine.

But all is tuneless, sunless, to Beauty. She sits at her writing-table—in a morning-wrapper all too ravishing to be described by this homely historian—a jeweled pen (whose gift ? Jeanne wonders) between her fingers, a monogrammed sheet of note-paper outspread before her. All is tuneless, sunless, to Miss Vivash. The post has brought her the weekly socials, once the harbingers, the bulwarks of her reputation, and Vivian sees the world through smoke-colored spectacles.

A new Beauty has been invented. Hence these tears ! “Metistophiles,” “The Star and Garter Gazette,” and other such chameleon-like journals of society sing pæans in the new Beauty’s favor. What antidote can be offered by July sunshine, by forest, stream, or garden, to shaft so poisoned as this ?

“It is monstrous, the work of a cabal,” Miss Vivash exclaims, inviting Jeanne, by a glance, to enter, and pushing aside her writing materials with irritation. “And to think that I should have been betrayed by this turn-coat, time-serving ‘Metistophiles !’” taking up a paper from the heap that lies beside her. “One, two, three—yes, I have had three copies sent me by different dear, good-natured friends, afraid, each of them, lest the vile scandal should not reach me fast enough. A new Beauty, indeed ! As if Beauties, like mushrooms, could spring up in a night !”

She turns the pages impatiently ; then, in a voice that quivers with genuine feeling, begins to read the vile scandal aloud. It is a panegyric, foreign to this story, upon some freshly imported dark-eyed American, “The Boston Rose,” whose charms and whose millinery have been the delight of Goodwood. Every detail respecting the lady’s dress, manner, speech, and luncheon is given with delightful outspokenness ; indeed, little Jeanne, in her ignorance, can scarce decide whether the racehorses, the jockeys, the three-card men, or

the reigning beauties are the most familiarly criticised. The Rose's parasol was expressly manufactured for her use in Lyons—its device, knots of her emblematic flower, with the initials B. R. on a white moiré ground. Her bouquet was presented to her, with exquisite grace, on the course, by Lord Vauxhall. No less a person than his Serene Transparency, Prince Ludwig of Szczakowa, was plateholder while the Beauty picked her chicken-bones and consumed her lobster-salad.

"Although mobbed at every turn," concludes the paragraph, "the roughs crying, 'That's her ! that's her !' royalty eyeing her through opera-glasses, a jealous herd of mothers and daughters criticising her every movement as she walked down the course upon her husband's arm, the Boston Rose wore her honors with the quiet unconsciousness that already distinguishes her. Enthusiastic artists and poets declare that such a nose and lips have never before been seen out of marble. In sober prose we may state that no such living goddess, 'ripe and real, worth all the beauties of your stone ideal,' has graced Goodwood during the past dozen years, at least."

"It is written by their own sub-editor," cries Vivian, throwing the paper from her with disgust. "It is the work of Stokes ! Could I mistake his style ? Did Stokes not give me scores of such notices, did he not give me a leader every second week, until I refused to get him an invi-

tation to Strawberry House? 'No such goddess seen at Goodwood for a dozen years!' And only last July—twelve short months ago—"

She turns abruptly to the glass; she analyzes the reflection it gives her back. Alas! and at this moment lines are on her forehead, hardness is round her lips. It takes no great stretch of prophetic vision to predict what Vivian Vivash will be in half another decade.

"I am not growing old," so she cries harshly, and more as though she apostrophized Fate than addressed her companion. "I have not changed—'tis impossible I should have changed, and me not eight-and-twenty yet!"

Be not over-critical, reader! Can you expect the most beautiful woman the world has seen for four hundred years to be grammatical?

"And this notice in 'The Star and Garter'!" taking up another paper, out of whose sheets drops a lithographed sketch—a short-lipped, high-nosed, drooping-shouldered gem of the aristocracy. "To think that a miserable penny-a-liner, a man whom we used to have to dinner *out of pity*, dares, because I am alone and unprotected, to write of me like this!—

"The success of our deposed queen was, from first to last, a success of esteem. Thanks to a smile, a pair of shoulders, a friendly artist, and a momentary stagnation in the beauty mart, she awoke one morning, like Lord Byron, to find

herself famous. That the descent of the stick has been quick as the uprising of the rocket can surprise no one. The whilom divinity of our smoking-rooms, the V. V. of our breast-pins and pipe-bowls, had not, in plain English, and as the intelligent foreigner told us from the first, a feature in her face.'

"And I wish that I were dead—no, I wish Lord Vauxhall were dead, here at my feet!" The light that lies in Beauty's eyes is not a pleasant one. "But for him and his Twickenham dinners—dinners given to ladies of position to-day, to Mademoiselle Sara, from the circus, to-morrow—I should not have angered the one man who loved me."

A look of real emotion sweeps across Vivian's face. Wound the vanity of a woman of her mold, and, in nine cases out of ten, she will unaffectedly believe 'tis her heart that suffers.

". . . I should be rich, I should have the world on my side still. During a season and a half, who dared leave me out of anything? I went to all the ambassadors' houses, I used to sit next the prime minister at dinner. If members of reigning families came to London on a visit, I was asked to meet them. My name appeared, as a matter of course, at the concerts and garden parties—and when the Court went in mourning I wore black. If I had married—yes, if I had married even a shoddy Mecænas"—let

us not ask how Beauty pronounces the word !—
“I should be in high places at this moment. The American creature is married. To get on in such a horrid, intriguing world, a poor helpless woman wants a protector. Thank Heaven, Jeanne,” this with trenchant bitterness, “that you are out of reach of temptation. Thank Heaven, on bended knee, for your homely looks. There was a time,” moans Beauty, “when I thought I would rather die than be ugly—yes, and I have said so openly, no matter what fine ladies with plain faces were listening. I had best change my opinions now. To be dowdy and virtuous, to have this hideous Black Forest for a background, to count the spoons, to chronicle the small beer of Schloss Egmont will be my fate, I doubt not, and I—oh, I shall have to bear it, yet neither commit murder nor suicide, if I can !”

And, motioning to Jeanne to quit her, Miss Vivash, with a dreary yawn, returns to her letter-writing. Without betrayal of confidence, may we not glance across her shoulder and read ?

“SCHLOSS EGMONT IN BADEN.

“MY VERY DEAREST PRINCESS : All that you told me of your old home falls short of the mark. Schloss Egmont is simply too charming. Till now I never knew how little I care for the dingy parks, the hot and glaring streets of London. The forests are pretty to a degree, exactly the fashionable

shade of deep bluish green that is so becoming—you must remember *the dress I wore* at Lady Flora Walgrave's breakfast? At present I have not got beyond the dear romantic old garden. The fish-ponds, and juniper-hedges, and things do make one feel so *à la Watteau!* It seems a sin to have no aspirant R. A., brush in hand, to paint one. Yesterday I took afternoon tea, merely from artistic sentiment, beside a broken dial on the western terrace, and consoled my solitude by thinking how often you and Count Paul must have *played there* when you were children. I wore an enchanting tea gown of printed washing silk, on a cream ground over blue, the silk made *en sacque*, with cascade of Auvergne lace, folds of Indian muslin (fitting the figure exquisitely), and a cap the same shade, of Pompadour satin. It seems to me, though I have only seen your brother with the eyes of the *spirit*, that I know him better than any of the throng I used to dance and ride with in London. How much more really flattering is his delicate homage than all the noisy fulsome praises of the crowd!—But you must promise never to betray me—never to let him suspect that I wrote thus! Alas! I am too romantic, it is the fault of my character. If my *heart had been* worldly, I should be in a very different position at this moment, as you know.

“Mamselle Ange, the housekeeper, a quite too delicious old oddity, received a telegram from

Count Paul this morning, and we are to expect his coming next Saturday. Lady Pamela and Sir Christopher wish to get up theatricals for the evening of his arrival, and I have been persuaded into saying yes. Had my taste been consulted, I would far sooner have met for the first time in the delightful quietness of the country, the budding woods around, the primroses blossoming, the song of the nightingale, or of whatever bird it is that sings at this season of the year, overhead! But poor dear Pamela is as frivolous as ever, and Sir Christopher—

“Ah, my friend, conscience, I confess, pricks me sorely when I look at Sir Christopher Marlowe, and think what manner of man he might have become had *Fate been kinder* to him. But ‘tis folly to remember.’ Sir Christopher has an ancient name, an unincumbered estate, and I am a lowly born country girl, raised by accident (as some one says, ‘Can you help being perfectly beautiful any more than being perfectly clever, or a perfect fool?’) out of the ranks. Yes, dearest Salome, though the great ones of the earth have taken me up, I never forget my station, or theirs. But I have A Heart! Any woman who marries without love, according to my code, commits *a crime*. And so Sir Christopher knows that I am unchangeable, and tries to pretend, poor thing, that he is consoled. Sometimes the fear haunts me that he will turn desperate—at a cer-

tain miserable time, don't you remember hearing how wildly he played at loo and baccarat?—and marry Lady Pamela Lawless. Heaven forbid it ! Although I can give nothing warmer, the poor little fellow has all my friendship, and I would not see a man I care for marry a milliner's block. A milliner's block, too, without beauty, though no one living underrates pink and white charms, and *worships intellect* more than me.

“As I have spoken of theatricals, you will ask about our *dramatis personæ*. Oh, what a falling off is here—and when one remembers my success with Lady Clearwell's Incomparables, every place gone three weeks beforehand, and stalls got for the Portuguese princes only through the very highest influence ! But I have drunk the Cup of Éclat to the dregs—my ambition now is a fireside, domestic joy, affection—and I rate such vanities at their true worth. *Ma très chère*, we have got, in addition to the three chief actors that you know, the housekeeper's adopted daughter, little Jeanne. The child is plain to piquancy ; her lank locks, lean cheeks, and ‘intense’ expression would fit her for a model in the art school of ugliness. We have also got—tell it not in Gath, whisper it not in May Fair—a certain Herr Wolfgang, Jeanne's arithmetic master, to take the part of *jeune premier*. The poor man is awkward and uncomfortable, as might be expected from a person in his position ; still, as he can speak English

decently, one was obliged to enlist him or give up the idea of theatricals. You can imagine, with what you used to call my *patrician proclivities*, that Herr Wolfgang's society must be rather a trial to me. However, I think nothing of myself. All I wish is to insure a brilliant home-coming to the brother of my friend.

"I gather from Mamselle Ange's talk that Count Paul's tastes are admirably simple. In his boyhood he met with some romantic adventure, it seems, that for years has made him shun the world. (Like the hero in that talented novel we read together, don't you remember, the free-thinking Life Guardsman, with fifty thousand a year, and blonde whiskers, who took to wandering about Europe, the curse of Cain on his brow, and singing Anacreontic songs in the *cafés*!) Oh, are not these tastes mine? A country life, a moderate fortune, enough and only enough of London to give zest to the remaining five months of the year! One's friends about one, a little quiet yachting, perhaps, in autumn—ah, dearest friend, will these placid delights of existence ever be mine, or—

"I send a thousand diplomatic good wishes to *ce cher Prince*, and I am my Salome's devotedly attached—VIVIAN."

"Have you heard of this American *parvenue*, whom the newspapers are absurdly trying to write into celebrity? I saw her at the Opera before I

left town, a little lean doll, with wide-open, foolish eyes, the manners of a schoolgirl, and a husband who, they say, is a first-rate pistol-shot, and will not allow his wife's photograph to be sold in the shops. My dear, she can come *to no good*. These barbarous marital virtues might do in California—do for one of the heroes in Bret Harte's novels. They will never pave the way to success in nineteenth-century London."

CHAPTER XII.

FIRST REHEARSALS.

PAUL VON EGMONT'S return is fixed for Saturday. The actors have five days yet before them for the erection of their stage, for the organization of their footlights, for their scenery, properties, programmes, rehearsals, and quarrels.

Quarrels? Who that takes a part in amateur theatricals but must echo the sentiments of quaint old proverb-writer Le Clerq? "J'adore les proverbes." So he makes one of his own stage personages declare. "C'est la plus belle invention. C'est la source de mille tracasseries. Aussitôt qu'on les introduit dans une maison on est assuré de jouir de toutes les divisions, de toutes les zizanies, les médisances, les calomnies, qui règnent ordinairement parmi les acteurs de profession."

"Unless the cast is revised, I owe it to my own self-respect to withdraw from the piece," says Miss Vivash, with uplifted profile. "My recollections of dearest Blanche Plantagenet, of Lord William Frederick de Vesey—such high breeding, such talent—"

"Unless I may stick to Cesario, I act nothing," cries Lady Pamela, stoutly determined. "I have ordered my Hessians to be sent over from London, and unless I can bring them in, like Mr. Crummles's pump, I strike."

"Ladies," interposes Ange, in despair, "remember my larder! self-respect, high breeding, Hessians! I have ordered twenty pair of chickens from France, I have ordered pies from Strasburg, and salmon from Geneva. And there is thunder in the air!"

"Pity the sorrows of a grand chamberlain," chimes in Sir Christopher Marlowe tragically—"a grand chamberlain in a yellow-flowered waistcoat, an ill-fitting periwig, an ermine-lined cloak, and knickerbockers of the period. This is my attire. My histrionic genius will be displayed in making fourteen profound salutations, in announcing everybody into everybody else's presence, and in generally tripping myself up on my own sword, from the rising of the curtain until its fall. If I might exchange—"

"No further exchanges are possible," says Miss Vivash coldly. "As dear Lady Pamela inclines

so strongly toward hose and doublet, I suppose she must have her way. Such things are matters of taste. You, Sir Christopher, would be too incongruous as the Count Leoni—”

“But congruous, exceedingly, in the yellow-flowered waistcoat and ill-fitting periwig of the Grand Chamberlain ! Mein Herr ” (and Sir Christopher turns to Wolfgang), “I wish you joy of the part assigned to you to enact. You are to make love, sir, in quick succession to the Duchess of Carrara (as played by Miss Vivash) and to her Maid of Honor (as played by Fräulein Jeanne). You are to be gallant, jealous, ferocious, and irreproachably matrimonial in a breath. You are also to wear a cherry-colored doublet, unearthed from the depths of Mamselle Ange’s lumber-room, white boots, a Baden militiaman’s sword, a plume, and tights. Receive my best wishes.”

The evening of the first set rehearsal has arrived. A stage, at once cumbrous and creaky, after the manner of German carpenter’s work, has been put up in the state dining-room ; foot-lights are burning and going out at uncertain intervals ; properties have been hastily got together ; a scene, anachronistic as to date and country, has been brought down from the Fürstenzimmer ; and all the members of the corps are quarreling with true theatrical warmth and spirit over their *rôles*. The master, who as yet has not heard a word of the play, is to be allowed to read his part. Miss Vi-

vash undertakes the functions of stage-manager and prompter. Ange—sore perplexed as to the likely effects of thunder on poultry and Strasburg pies, hot, disheveled from superintendence of the village carpenters—sits away in the darkest corner of the *salle*, doing audience.

“If you would like to put yourself entirely in my hands, Mr. Wolfgang?” suggests the Beauty in dulcet tones. “I have acted twice in this piece with Lady Clearwell’s Incomparables, Lord William Frederick taking Leoni. I know how every word, every look of the impassioned lover (poor dear Lord William Frederick!) should be rendered. Will you consent?”

“Will you consent to be troubled with such a pupil?” Wolfgang answers, moving instantly to her side. “I have no dramatic genius at the best of times. I am not sure of getting out a single *B* or *P* correctly.”

“Oh, we will make allowance for deficiencies!” she interrupts. “Of course, in such a position as yours, it is not likely you should have seen any first-class acting, but you will be on the scene with me nearly all the time, and with my abilities, as Lady Clearwell says, I can pull the greatest stick in the world through.” Tact, it may be remarked, is scarcely one of Vivian Vivash’s characteristics. “Now, if every one is ready, we may as well begin.—Sir Christopher, you enter from C. to L.”

“Wondering which of the seven cardinal sins I have committed, and swearing by every hair in my reverend beard—Garrick himself could make nothing of such a character,” breaks forth Sir Christopher, with more energy than it is his custom to show on any subject. “If you are bent on comedy, Miss Vivash, why not choose something all the world knows? There is ‘She Stoops to Conquer.’ I will undertake to give you Tony Lumpkin, down to the ground, and—”

“‘She Stoops to Conquer’ requires half a dozen set scenes. We have one—if you can call it one! ‘She Stoops to Conquer’ requires sixteen performers. The Schloss Egmont Incapables (I hope you admire the title I have found for our company, Mr. Wolfgang?)—the Schloss Egmont Incapables muster five—if you can call them five.”

“Then have a farce, something that shall make the gods laugh, even though they do not know a word of English.—‘Betsy Baker,’ or ‘Poor Pillicoddy.’ We have about the right number, it seems, for ‘Poor Pillicoddy,’ and I will take Sarah Blunt. There is not a professional in London can act a servant-girl better than I, and our friend Wolfgang will give us Pillicoddy Germanized.”

“With the part of Anastasia Pillicoddy for myself. You are exceedingly appreciative, Sir Christopher! Will Miss Dempster’s talents or those of Lady Pamela be best adapted for the colossal mariner, Captain O’Scuttle?”

"Can Captain O'Scuttle wear Hessian boots?" cries Lady Pamela. "I am unburdened by false pride. I will take any character in the English drama which will enable me to bring in my boots."

"Then take the Grand Chamberlain," says Sir Christopher promptly. "Wear your Hessians, spurs and all, Lady Pamela, and let me be the Maid of Honor's lover.—Miss Dempster, you consent to the transfer?"

"It would be a vast deal simpler to give up the idea of acting," says Miss Vivash, with a movement of impatience. "Even in this benighted country I don't choose that people should connect *my* name with a failure."

"You should have settled these disputes among yourselves, earlier," cries Ange, in a choked voice. "Only this morning I might have counter-ordered my supper. Twenty pair of chickens, Strasburg pies, salmon—and thunder in the air!"

"Suppose we go through the rehearsal first, and discuss our demerits afterward," suggests Wolfgang, in his tone of quiet mastery—a tone to which Vivian herself unconsciously yields. "The Chamberlain," consulting the book as he speaks, "enters first, and to him Count Leoni. Some one tell me the plot in three words, that I may know what ground the Count Leoni stands upon."

"Plot!" repeats Sir Christopher, with a groan. "As if our splendid play possessed one! I have

read it six times, I have learned my part—Lady Pamela, rather, has drilled my part into me—and I know less what the whole thing is about than I did at starting. In the first place, the Count Leoni is not the Count Leoni at all.”

“That is wrong,” exclaims Ange, glad of an occasion to ventilate her temper at the master’s expense. “Give me a man, Mr. Wolfgang, who is what he seems. I am no friend of concealments and disguises.”

Under pretext of approaching a lamp, Mr. Wolfgang moves somewhat aside. He bends his face down, as if engaged in conning his part, and replies not.

“I honor your sentiments, Mamselle Ange,” remarks Sir Christopher. “But I go a great deal further. I say, give me the man who does not need the same pair of lips to refuse him twice. This wretched Count, who is no count, gets snubbed by every woman in the piece.”

(“The part will suit me, after all,” says Wolfgang in parenthesis, and without looking round.)

“Is rejected by the Duchess, Miss Vivash, flirted with, furiously, by the Maid of Honor, Fräulein Jeanne, and in the end is poor creature enough—”

“The story tells itself, without annotation, Sir Christopher,” cries Vivian, her color heightening.—“Mr. Wolfgang, you are this poor creature, this Prince Louis of Savoy, who, disguised as his

own envoy, solicits the hand of the Duchess Olympia. Let the rehearsal proceed."

The rehearsal proceeds: more smoothly than might have been hoped for, after prelude so stormy. Whatever the worth of the comedy, as art, it is not ill suited to the powers of the "Egmont Incapables." Vivian has been taught to act by the best professional instructors in London—I should rather say, has been taught to walk "stagily" before footlights, to pose in "stagey" attitudes, to talk in a "stagey" voice; the *art* of acting is unteachable. Lady Pamela, as an amateur, is above mediocrity. In the character of the Maid of Honor there is ample scope for Jeanne to display grace, liveliness, and a certain sly, girlish malice that is not without its charm.

At the first telling scene in the play, the interview between Olympia's lover and the mischievous Maid of Honor, even Mamselle Ange applauds.

Giulia. Take my word for it, the Prince of Savoy has had a very lucky escape from the Duchess of Carrara.

Leoni. You amaze me, madame. In what way?

Giulia. She is as capricious as forty duchesses and five hundred maids of honor.

Leoni. A very venial fault.

Giulia. She is haughty.

Leoni. A duchess should be so.

Giulia. Recklessly profuse of expenditure.

Leoni. Her rank may demand it.

Giulia. Of boundless extravagance.

Leoni. Her means may warrant it.

Giulia. Inordinately given to pleasure.

Leoni. The taste is not uncommon.

Giulia. And to conclude, she loves some one else.

Leoni. Ah, now you have me at fault. Louis of Savoy could accept no second love.

Wolfgang pronounces these words with significance ; he looks hard across the stage at Miss Vivash.

Accept no second love ! A man who should win Beauty's shipwrecked heart must be content to take it with unquestioning faith, content to take it in such shattered, dilapidated condition as it came to him. Second, fifth, tenth—who shall reckon the experiences that poor heart has gone through since the day when Lord Vauxhall first launched his *trouvaille*, without compass, without anchor, among the perilous shoals and quicksands of London life ?

“Second love !” exclaims Lady Pamela Lawless, with her airy laugh. “Vivian, my dear, fancy you or me going back to such preadamite matters as our second loves.”

“My first love is the only one to which I have been constant,” says Miss Vivash, unconsciously sincere. “By the time I was seven years old, I knew my looking-glass was my best friend, and I

fell in love with what I saw there. I shall remain faithful to that attachment till I die."

"Bravissima!" cries Sir Christopher, applauding on his finger-tips. "If it were not for shocking Mamselle Ange, we would imagine ourselves to be in the Palace of Truth, get up a game of 'confessions,' Miss Vivash enacting the penitent-in-chief. It would be more piquant than the wickedest play ever written in any language."

The rehearsal has to be thrice repeated. The master acquits himself creditably, *B's* and *P's* notwithstanding; but Vivian is a severe critic, and professes herself still unsatisfied. Mr. Wolfgang's points are not those with which Lord William Frederick brought down the plaudits of the house at Brighton. Mr. Wolfgang does not show tenderness enough as the lover of the Duchess, he throws altogether unnecessary ardor into his passing flirtation with the Maid of Honor. Especially does his rendering of one little scene go against her critical judgment. Looking after Giulia as she quits the stage, Leoni is made to exclaim:

"At last, then, I obtained what I have sickened for so long—woman's love, without the alloy of woman's vanity and self-interest. I am loved for myself, not for my—"

"Oh dear, no, Mr. Wolfgang, this kind of thing will never do," interrupts Vivian sharply. "You misunderstand the whole drift of the sit-

uation. Leoni is thinking of Olympia, only of Olympia."

"But he has that moment besought Giulia, passionately, to marry him," suggests the master.

"In a fit of mistaken jealousy, not caring whether the girl answers yes or no. His manner to her must be supremely indifferent—Lord William Frederick acted it so deliciously that dearest Blanche Plantagenet was just the least bit in the world piqued—his eyes must follow her coldly as she leaves the scene."

"Ach, soh! That will want study indeed.—Little Jeanne," says Wolfgang kindly, and holding out his hand to his pupil, "come hither. This 'looking cold' is a part that will, indeed, need practice."

For a moment there is dead silence. Wolfgang's expression of face, the familiar "little Jeanne," the change from the half-deferential, half-bantering manner in which he has been receiving Vivian's instructions, take every one present aback.

Vivian herself is the first to speak.

"If an amateur performance is to have a chance of success, there should be, not half a dozen, but half a hundred rehearsals. Every point, as Lady Clearwell says, ought to be labored at, stippled up like a miniature. 'The Maid of Honor' may not be brilliantly witty!"

“Brilliantly witty!” echoes Sir Christopher, with gloomy emphasis.

“But I have never known it fail of success when I have taken the part of Olympia.” A master memory used to keep score of the number of times the heroine fainted throughout a fashionable novel. Could any mind reckon up the “I’s” that occur during one half-hour of Vivian Vivash’s conversation? “All I ask is—that I should be decently supported. I must coach you all, separately and individually, in your parts. Now, if Mr. Wolfgang”—she gives a side-glance, then looks down—“if Mr. Wolfgang could run over to Schloss Egmont for an hour or so every forenoon, not exactly for general rehearsal, but just to polish up the scenes of love and jealousy, in which Leoni and the Duchess appear alone?”

What answer but one can Wolfgang, a man in nowise lifted to heroic heights above vanity, return to such an appeal? He will run over to Schloss Egmont to-morrow, will hold himself in readiness at all hours of the day between this and Saturday, if such be Miss Vivash’s commands.

“And your pupils in Freiburg,” cries Ange, looking up with a queer expression from her corner—“those excellent, studious lads you have so often told us about, to whom work means work, and Euclid, Euclid? What is to become of the pupils’ mathematics while the master is junketing and play-acting about the country?”

"The pupils need rest," says Wolfgang gravely. "Overwork is sapping their intellectual strength. I shall give my excellent, studious lads a holiday until the morrow of Paul von Egmont's return."

"The studious lads, and their mathematics, too, seem to be of an elastic nature," retorts Ange dryly.

CHAPTER XIII.

LORD VAUXHALL'S INVENTION.

WOLFGANG keeps his word. The scenes of love and jealousy are as conscientiously labored at as though the great Lady Clearwell were stage manageress, and everything augurs well for Vivian's approaching triumph.

Laces, satins, paste brilliants, Hessian boots, are on their road from London; pink satin play-bills, with Vivian Vivash's name preëminent in big capitals, are ordered from Baden; notes of acceptance, yes, even from their Serene Transparencies at the Residenz, pour hourly in. Mamselle Ange, over head and ears in the preparation of calves'-feet jelly, English plum-cakes, and German zuckerbäckerei—Mamselle Ange, more confused of thought, more uncertain of temper than usual, declares that a new reign of folly and ruin is being inaugurated at Schloss Egmont. From

father to son, the Von Egmonts have ruined themselves after one fashion. It will be the same story now : the only difference that, with fast London notions, with a set of fast London prodigals to assist him, Paul's ruin is likely to come about at a somewhat quicker pace than that of his ancestors.

Everything augurs well for Vivian's approaching triumph ; but Vivian herself is bored well-nigh to extinction ! When the English post is in, when the late breakfast is dawdled through, when Wolfgang has received his daily dose of poison from the flattering, cold eyes of his preceptress, how, in very truth, should poor Beauty occupy herself ? After Paul von Egmont's return, things may be better. Von Egmont, so she will say pleasantly to Jeanne and Mamselle Ange, between her yawns, will, at least, be *human*. He will have subjects of conversation (by "conversation" Vivian means the gossip of the clubs, the last scandal of the turf, or of the law-courts), and he will have taste—to appreciate Miss Vivian Vivash's charms !

Meanwhile there are endless hours still to be slaughtered before his arrival—in this July prime, this perfect weather ; no fleck of cloud, from dawn to even, on heaven's blue face ; every black aisle of the forest warm with piny fragrance ; the distant mountains steeped, from pinnacle to base, in sunshine !—endless hours of the too transient

Schwarzwald summer to be slaughtered, not delighted in. Are there no Big Houses in the neighborhood, no resident families, no mortal means that shall rescue one from Schloss Egmont and from the vacuum of one's own thoughts? Is there nothing profitabler to listen to than the sougning of the fir-boughs, the fall of the wood-cutter's axe, the cadence of the little burn as it runs on for ever through the drowsy, carnation-scented Schloss gardens to the Rhine?

Providentially, at a late hour on Wednesday, a passing chance of self-escape presents itself. Mamselle Ange's errand-maiden, toughest, most weather-beaten of Ariels, the carrier, news-bearer, huckster, and general diplomatist and emissary of the district, brings word that an afternoon *fête*, with concert and dancing, is to take place at Badenweiler to-morrow, Thursday. A special train will leave St. Ulrich at four, returning before midnight; carriages will be in waiting to convey the *sommer frischlers* from Mülheim station to Badenweiler; and five marks a head, so cheap is pleasure in the Fatherland, will cover the expenses, entrance-tickets included, of the day.

"Let us have our five marks' worth, by all means," says Vivian, coming languidly to life at even this mildest prospect of dissipation. "I will enlighten the savage mind by wearing my Derby white, and *the* parasol. A pity the only

hearts to break will be those of a few provincial Fraus and Fräuleins."

It is characteristic of Miss Vivash that, in reckoning up the probable number of her slain, she ever gives precedence to the women who shall die for envy over the men who shall die for love.

"And I," cries Lady Pamela, "will wear my pocket-handkerchiefs.—Oh, you may open those eyes of yours, little Jeanne!—I have a dress of spotted blue handkerchiefs sewed together, and look charming in it. I wore my handkerchiefs at Ascot, and was called by my enemies a symphony in spots, and by my friends the ugliest woman in the ugliest dress on the course. You will see if I do not make the Badenweiler notabilities wake up a little."

"If we could only organize a party," sighs Vivian, looking hard at her own fair, discontented face in the glass. Schloss Egmont is rather worse off than most German country-houses for mirrors, yet it would seem that the Beauty never sits, stands, or leans, save at some angle from which she can contemplate the reflection of her own charms. "Sir Christopher, I suppose, *toujours* Sir Christopher, and the inevitable Wolfgang must be the limit of our ambition. If we could only run across some chance man of one's own set, some civilized being, at least, to tell the people *who one is!*"

"Why not advertise?" suggests Lady Pa-

mela. "Mamselle Ange assures me that everything—from barrels of herrings and betrothals up to challenges and Beethoven concerts—is advertised in the St. Ulrich newspaper. It would be a cheap short-cut to celebrity. 'A noted London Beauty, attended by foil and friends, is positively engaged to appear at the Badenweiler *fêtes*. The Beauty will wear the genuine dress and parasol, a little the worse for wear, that obtained so startling a success at the last Derby. Foil in pocket-handkerchiefs. Show-hours from four till eleven. OBSERVE! No extra charge made on admission-tickets.' "

"Would it not be excellent?" cries Vivian, unsuspecting of irony. "Would it not wring the provincial female breast with envy?" Lacking all natural sense of humor, poor Beauty is self-absorbed (even when the sacred theme of her own charms is touched upon) to a degree that curiously deadens her perception of ridicule.—"Jeanne, my dear," turning with her accustomed frank contempt to the Ugly Duckling, "how do you propose to array yourself? In white muslin—oh, quite impossible. I am not afraid of rivalry," with her thin, cold laugh, "but I can not allow two shades of white in the same group.—Lady Pamela, advise Miss Dempster what toilet will best suit her complexion, and at the same time throw up my dress, and yours."

To bid little Jeanne relinquish white muslin is

to bid her relinquish her confirmation frock, the one fresh dress her modestly stocked wardrobe can furnish forth. "Decide for me as you like, Miss Vivash ; I am quite familiar with the part of Cinderella," she exclaims ruefully. "My only other clean frock is a pink print, washed out until there is not a trace of pattern left, and so much" (measuring off a goodly distance on her arm) "too short in the skirt."

"Delightful ! The pink will be exactly the thing," cries Vivian. "Cinderella married a prince in the end. Who shall say what may be in store for you ? Wear the washed-out print, my dear, and the coral beads as well. Pink and scarlet, for some complexions, go together charmingly."

Jeanne's pillow, ere she sleeps at night, is wet with saltiest tears ! When next day comes, however, when she stands beside the Derby white and the symphony in spots on the St. Ulrich railway-platform, she feels that there may be worse parts to play than that of Cinderella—more conspicuous evils in the world than a washed-out print without a trace of pattern left, and a string of coral beads !

Lady Pamela's appearance is, of course, frankly grotesque. You look at her with a sigh of pity for the generation in which such things are possible. Still, the spotted blue handkerchiefs are clean. Her attire may be the result of caprice,

fashion, a wager, madness. Want of beauty may have impelled her, in default of legitimate admiration, to challenge men's notice by a freak. Still she is clean. But her companion

No doubt when that training Indian silk first started for the Derby it was fresh as the delicate cream-and-rose bloom of its wearer's complexion. Through what hard professional wear and tear, what theatre-going, what champagne suppers it has since passed, who shall say? It is fashioned with the long cuirass bodice Miss Vivash ordinarily affects. The sleeves are slashed with gold; the skirts are so narrow that one calculates, with painful uncertainty, as to Beauty's chance of surmounting the two-foot-high step of a German railway-carriage. She wears an unlooped Rembrandt hat over one ear, ruffles of lace (so yellow they might have belonged to Queen Elizabeth herself) around her throat and wrists, and *the* parasol, a gorgeous, half-Japanese construction, with the monogram V. V. embroidered in gold and silver—now, alas! tarnished—on a white ground. What idle apprentice but took note of that parasol at the World's Fair; what idle apprentice but listened dutifully to the legend which gave that parasol interest?

The station-master and porters stare in official silence. The assembled crowd of pleasure-seeking St. Ulrichers stare also; not in silence. With fine, trenchant impartiality they criticise the

Beauty's narrow, trailing skirts ; Lady Pamela's spotted pocket-handkerchiefs ; the tall hat, close-cropped hair, square elbows, crutch, and bracelet of Sir Christopher. Relying on the strangers' ignorance of German, they hazard plainest practical guesses as to the social status, age, wealth, occupation, and morals of each member of the group.

Hot with shame, Jeanne Dempster shrinks away from her party ; she essays to hide herself among the crowd. If this be the effect produced by Hyde Park divinities in St. Ulrich, what sensation shall they not cause upon a larger scene, before a larger audience, at Badenweiler ?

"Tell me what the popular mind thinks of us," says Vivian, the moment they find themselves within friendly shelter of the railway-carriage. "Be amusing with all your might, little Jeanne, and be candid. Translate, in detail, every compliment you have heard."

"The popular mind does not think much of us," answers Jeanne sententiously. "The popular mind is uncertain whether we belong to a millinery establishment, a minor theatre, or a traveling circus from Leipsic Fair."

"Thank Heaven the good souls think nothing worse !" cries Lady Pamela. "The ferocious way in which one old lady eyed our charms made me really believe she was going to cry 'Police !' "

"They are a set of utter barbarians, of igno-

rant, uncultivated boors," remarks Miss Vivash. "There is not a shopboy in London but knows who one is—yes, and what sort of deference is due, too, to people of position."

And, leaning back in her place, Vivian folds her statuesque arms, and bestows looks of thunder on the smiling landscape—every league a new picture of sun-tinted beauty—through which they travel. Vistas of primeval forest ; villages where the stork builds in the quaint wood-spires ; the alder-fringed river ; the poplar avenues, stretching away toward purple Alsace—what does Vivian care for such sights as these !—Vivian, to whom our whole fair planet's crust is but a kind of filigree-work for the setting of dresses, bonnets, parasols, and whose higher ideas of landscape are comprised by Kensington Gardens when the band is playing, or the drive to Twickenham !

The pleasure-seekers leave their train at Mülheim. From thence a rickety, open *shandry-dan*, dignified, like everything which goes on four wheels throughout Germany, by the name of *droschka*, conveys them, through a succession of old-world hamlets, past rushing streams and busy saw-mills, to Badenweiler. Everywhere is the same sensation caused by London art-dress, by London beauty. Housewives rush forth, bare-armed, from kneading-pan or washing-tub, sawyers suspend their sawing, children their play ; all stare with startled bovine wonder (like Eng-

lish rustics before a hurdy-gurdy and white mice) at the strangers as they pass.

"We should have done better to advertise and placard," says Lady Pamela, when they find themselves, by this time with an attendant crowd, in the straggling mountain-lane that leads up from Badenweiler proper to the Kursaal. "The masses must be educated before they can appreciate the *Æsthetic*.—Janet, child, I don't know, all things considered, that I would mind changing dresses with you for the remainder of the day."

Sir Christopher looks, gravely admiring, at Jeanne's plain cotton frock, at her broad-brimmed peasant's hat.

"Miss Dempster's dress is idyllic," he remarks, with his little air of *dilettante* conviction. "Gainsborough would have been glad of her, just as she stands, as a model."

"Washed-out prints, cobbler-made shoes, coral necklace, and all," interrupts Jeanne, quickly fearful of ridicule. "I wonder, in Mr. Gainsborough's absence, how many conquests my idyllic appearance will make at Badenweiler?"

"Herr Wolfgang is to be there," observes Vivian laconically. "He asked leave to meet us with such pretty humility that I had not the heart to say nay. Of one conquest Jeanne is certain."

"Yes, of one conquest Fräulein Jeanne is certain," repeats Sir Christopher, in a tone that brings the color to the girl's cheeks.

Kit Marlowe is free to pay idle compliments, an he lists. There his liberty ends. The precise length of tether that shall be accorded to him for the remainder of the afternoon is speedily measured out by Miss Vivash.

“Gainsborough may have had his own crotchety ideas,” so she remarks, as they enter the wicket-gate of the Kurgarten. “I have mine ; and I say that the coloring of our group does not harmonize. Our group, as a natural consequence, must divide—do not all the painters declare that, if I am not artistic, I am nothing? Who comes with me? Will you, Sir Christopher?” (This in a sweet little tone of coaxing entreaty. She is not generally sweet to Sir Christopher Marlowe.) “Bygones shall, for once, be bygones, and we will try, really and honestly, if we can not remain half an hour in each other’s society without quarreling.”

Sir Christopher’s afternoon, I repeat, is laid out for him : pleasantly, surely. What better fate could a man desire, under summer sunshine, with music playing and soft winds blowing, than to be Beauty’s escort?—what better fate—unless it chance that he and Beauty have gone through the like kind of paradisiacal experiences already and grown sick of them !

As the two move slowly away down the central alley of the garden—every head turning to gaze after the trailing Indian silk, the marvelous

parasol, the fair "unconscious" face of Vivian—a new possibility flashes across Jeanne's mind. Miss Vivash is ambitious, disappointed, has newly lost a wealthy lover—conditions, surely, under which a heart like hers might easily be caught in the rebound. Why weave romances about German counts or German professors when the solid English acres, the position, the title of Sir Christopher Marlowe may lie at Beauty's very door?

Lady Pamela seems to guess her thoughts.

"A stranger might wonder, might he not, at the position in which our friends, yonder, stand toward each other? I wonder at it myself, sometimes. But you must know, my dear, we are people with a past—Kit Marlowe, Vivian, and I. At your age, naturally, all verbs are conjugated in the present tense, 'J'aime, tu aimes, il aime.' We have reached the *passé indéfini*—you see I have not quite forgotten my French grammar—we have got to '*nous avons aimé*.'"

"Who is 'we'?" asks Jeanne with interest. "*Not*—Lady Pamela Lawless and Sir Christopher Marlowe?"

"We show so many lingering symptoms of sentiment, do we not?" replies Lady Pamela—Jeanne thinks with a somewhat heightened color. "Everything about us so clearly denotes a pair of antiquated turtle-doves? No, child, no!

"'Je l'aime.

"'Tu l'adores.

“ ‘Il l’épouse.’

“If Kit Marlowe and I were to conjugate the verb ‘*aimer*,’ we should do so, depend upon it, according to the most advanced spirit of an enlightened age.”

As Lady Pamela speaks, they turn into one of the narrow paths that lead up through coolest emerald shade from the main avenue of the gardens. Five or six minutes’ brisk ascent brings them to the summit of the hill—the steepest, surely, of any Kurgarten in Germany—among the ruins of the Schloss. Immediately below is a sheer declivity, clothed in every varied green of juniper, beech, and mountain-ash. Behind and to the left are the Black Forest highlands ; crest after crest succeeding each other in long, soft stretches of wavy outline ; a very sea of hill, blue, undulating, as old Ocean himself. To the west is open plain, here purple, here golden, as the clouds slowly succeed each other athwart the sinking sun. The chimneys and roofs of Mühlhausen glisten, like points of fire, in the middle distance. In the foreground are a coffee-table, three or four painted chairs, and one of those gigantic revolving spy-glasses, with varicolored compartments, through which the German holiday-maker loves, in the interval between Wagner’s music of the future and the present consumption of cakes and coffee, to gaze on nature.

“Awfully jolly machine !” exclaims Lady

Pamela, turning the wheel briskly. Would the Pyramids, St. Peter's, the Venus of Milo, elicit any higher form of approval from her lips? "Life seen under difficulties of every shade and complexion. Rose-color! Ah, I knew the meaning of rose-color, myself, at the age of fifteen, and with Uncle Paget's stud still to the fore. Green! Yes, and I have lived for two long years in *that* atmosphere, grass-green as the monster jealousy could make it. Yellow! Artificial sunshine, champagne, gaslight; pleasures high-rouged and spicily flavored; life as it is now—as it has been, rather, any time during the past six seasons. And next, smoke-color! Rheumatism, district-visiting, the odd trick, a father confessor—the future.—Be thankful, little Jeanne, that you are only seventeen, farther off by a dozen years than I from the smoke-colored department; the mixed process of satiety and regret that men term 'sobering down.'"

She puts her hand under Jeanne's arm, and they continue their walk; emerging ere long upon the Frühlingsblume Plateau, a terrace immediately above the Kursaal, thronged at this sunset hour with loungers, and where the symphony in spots attracts nearly as much attention as Beethoven's Symphony in B flat (an epitome, say the Germans, of every phase of happy love!), which the band, at the present moment, plays deliciously.

But Lady Pamela's thoughts and converse

still are grave. "Yes," she goes on, leading her companion apart from the crowd, "we have got, all three of us, Herr Wolfgang will soon make an indifferent fourth, to the *passé indéfini*. Nous avons aimé poor little Kit Marlowe, I will say, to his credit, very honestly. You think it strange, do you not, that we should all be as good comrades as we are, and nothing more? Janet, I will whisper you a secret that is the secret of half London as well. In days gone by, exactly a twelvemonth ago next November, Sir Christopher Marlowe was over head and ears in love with Miss Vivash (or with the reputation of her Beauty—I have never been quite sure which), and she laughed at him."

There is no mistake about it this time. The color does deepen on Lady Pamela's cheek; her lip trembles.

"Laughed at him, relented, accepted an engagement-ring—we have it still, among our museum of trophies—and threw him over; all within the space of six short November days. Ah! those miserable days—I never thought a man could be so hard hit—just at the beginning of the hunting season, too, when you would say the human heart could brood over nothing long—save a black frost! I have told you, have I not, how Vivian and I first became allied? Grand-papa Vauxhall had disinterred her during his autumn's yachting, in some little village, west-

ward ho ! He announced his discovery, as an astronomer might announce the finding of a new planet, in the clubs, engaged a painter and a poet to give his *trouvaille* the hall-mark of fashion, and brought her and her mamma to stay with the Ladies Vauxhall in London. Mamma, as a first condition of success, we had to dismiss. It seems undutiful, you think, Jeanne ; but what should a Beauty Regnant do with a dowdy little Devonshire parsoness dogging her steps ? Mamma, her honest head turned by her daughter's budding greatness, we had to pack up and send home, and Vivian and I, under grandpapa's auspices, set up our joint establishment.

“That establishment was of a most delusive and transitory nature,” muses Lady Pamela mournfully. “A nutshell of a house, abutting on the Park, certainly, but so small, cruel tongues averred, that our maids had to lodge under the kitchen table and our page in the coal-scuttle. A nutshell of a house, a miniature brougham, a family coachman (from the livery stables), and a couple of riding-horses, all paid for—perhaps I ought to say all *not* paid for—by the month. For the yachting and hunting seasons we trusted to the hospitality of our friends, and our childlike faith was rewarded—I don't say without occasional rebuffs ; but these we were large-souled enough to overlook. Aspirant Beauties must have no flesh and blood about them, as the man

who was pilloried said of tradesmen ; no passions, no resentments ! August saw us on board the easiest-laced, most convivial yacht in Cowes. In September we were on the moors. Winter found us at Leamington. At Leamington poor little Kit Marlowe came to grief."

Lady Pamela stops short, a flush on her cheek, a light unwonted in her eyes. All the plainness of her face seems at this moment to be swept away, as if by magic.

"Beauty, Jeanne," she resumes, presently, "has its peculiar temptations (I wonder how often I have heard that phrase ?), with which no ugly women can really sympathize. Beauty may lure on an honest man to the utmost, refuse, accept, refuse him, all in half a week, and then make a jest of him among his friends afterward. The world will shrug its shoulders over his fate. Heartless ! My dear fellow, who would credit a professional Beauty with a heart ? Coquetry, vanity, greed—qualities which in other women may be vices—are *her* virtues. Kit Marlowe jilted ? Kit Marlowe must accustom himself to his position, as his betters, not a few, have done before him.

"The old Duke of Beaujolais, I should tell you, was in Leamington just then ; padded, decrepit, one foot in a slipper, the other in the grave, needing a couple of servants to support him to his wheel-chair, or lift him from his car-

riage. And a horrid whisper ran through the length and breadth of Leamington society that his Grace might remarry. 'Twas a whisper only ; but it decided Kit Marlowe's fate. What chance for a poor little country-gentleman with his three or four thousand a year, against the bewildering, pulse-stirring possibility of winning the Duke of Beaujolais's *heart* ? ”

“Sir Christopher took his punishment stoutly,” Lady Pamela finishes. “He did more. He continued, as not one man out of fifty would have done, a friend of the woman who had jilted him. Half a dozen times since, when events have been taking a threatening enough turn for us, Sir Christopher has worked them straight again, and not in the Vauxhall fashion. From first to last, Lord Vauxhall's patronage of Vivian was—an advertisement of Lord Vauxhall's vanity. ‘The town wanted a new beauty,’ grandpapa used to say, with his big laugh, ‘and I invented one. I hope I am not to be made sponsor for all my Invention's future career.’ And the words had a sneer in them. Sir Christopher has been loyal as a brother through good report and through evil—through evil, especially.”

“And is brotherly loyalty a state of feeling sure to last ? ” asks little Jeanne.

“It will last in this case, child. Sir Christopher is not made of such poor stuff as to pin his heart upon his sleeve a second time. No ; Kit

Marlowe will remain a bachelor, and I—well, there is some kind of cousinship between us to start with, and I already am ‘nine-and-twenty, and used up.’ It will not take many more years before I shall be old and staid enough to keep house for him with propriety. Did any civilized people ever stare like these?”

Four white-capped Freiburg students have stretched themselves across the path, and gravely, as though they were conducting some scientific research, are examining the symphony in spots through four pairs of spectacles.

“One would think they had never seen an ugly woman queerly dressed in their lives before,” says Lady Pamela calmly. “Let us hope that the native mind will recover its equilibrium before the ball begins. I mean to dance every dance throughout the programme, if the Teuton will only collect his scattered wits sufficiently to invite me.”

CHAPTER XIV.

IN SILK ATTIRE.

“‘*La philosophie à deux,*’” remarks Kit Marlowe, a couple of hours later on. “Let us thank the gods, whatever gods there be, that one is verdant enough still to prefer a hop to philosophy.”

The ball-room windows stand open to the

night ; soft and low the Bohemian band strikes up the prelusory bars of the Tannhäuser waltzes ; Jeanne and Sir Christopher are partners. Blonde fräuleins with garlands in their hair, with pearls around their throats, with floating knots of ribbon, with superabundant adornment of all kinds, are being led forth, by slim-waisted, yellow mustached warriors, from the side of stalwart mammas. Lady Pamela, falling at once into the easy etiquette of Kursaal ballrooms, has accorded her hand to an unknown cavalier—an Austrian, overredolent of Government cigars, of inexpensive macassar ; and alas ! with cuffs and collar too palpably of paper, but fair and poetic-looking as any stage Faust. Miss Vivash lingers still, “philosophizing” with Wolfgang, who smokes his cigar in the darkness of the gardens. The master, detained by his conveniently elastic pupils, has only arrived by the latest train from Freiburg, and Miss Vivash unselfishly foregoes the certain successes of the ballroom to be his companion.

Somewhat farther, perhaps, than Mr. Wolfgang suspects, may the smoking of this cigar, the pursuit of this philosophie à deux, land him.

“I believe you are a philosopher without knowing it, Sir Christopher,” says little Jeanne gayly. The girl’s heart is ice-cold ; her cheeks are on fire. She has determined, with all the will that is in her, to show indifference to Wolfgang and his

actions ; and, like most unpractical actors, runs a risk of overdoing her part. "With a room full of ribbons and tulles and laces, a man must be a philosopher, indeed, who should choose a Cinderella like me for his partner."

Sir Christopher gazes at the washed-out print with an air of lachrymose gallantry that, whether she be heart-broken or no, brings a smile, perforce, to Jeanne's lips.

"A Watteau, a wood-nymph, a poem," he remarks sentimentally. "When you are my age, have seen as much of the pomps and vanities of ribbons and laces as I have, my dear child, you will value them accordingly."

"Your age ! I should hope some one will have taken pity on me before then," cries Jeanne. "Deserving poverty may be interesting enough in its teens. What would you say to a Watteau, a wood-nymph, a poem, in limp linen at eight-and-twenty ?"

Sir Christopher Marlowe sighs. "I should inordinately like to know, in detail, what you mean by 'some one taking pity on you,' Miss Dempster ?"

"Would you ? Oh, my ambition is modest, very ! I could content myself on an allowance of five hundred pounds a year pin-money." Ange and Jeanne, between them, may annually spend on their clothes five hundred marks—not a pfennig more. "Five hundred pounds a year pin-

money, with unlimited opportunities for running into debt, and an occasional bonus in the shape of jewelry. I am likely to come across that kind of 'some one' in the Black Forest, am I not?"

"Not only likely, but certain, if you would let 'some one' take you at your word. In the mean time," whispers Sir Christopher tenderly, "shall we begin our waltz, do you think? I am quite contented either way, but shall we make a start—or not?"

The suggestion reminds Jeanne Dempster that during the past two minutes she and her partner have been standing in an attitude of preparation, her hand on Kit Marlowe's shoulder, his arm around her waist—reminds, but disconcerts her not. This is Jeanne's first introduction to the world, the first ballroom in which she has stood, a come-out young lady, playing her part among grown up men and women. She knows nothing of ballroom ethics; does not surmise that a position, admitted to be correct when in rapid movement, should be open to animadversion when in repose. Looking up, however, toward an open French window near which they stand, it chances that she catches a glimpse of Miss Vivash and Wolfgang. The master's head is in shadow. Jeanne can see the face of Vivian—clear in the lamp-light, as a delicate cameo upon a setting of dusky green background.

A faint little sneer is round Beauty's lips; con-

temptuous is the expression of her half-closed eyes. And Jeanne's heart sickens. In this moment it is given her to taste of the tree of mundane knowledge, and, with a cold chill, she realizes that its flavor is bitter, exceedingly.

"Let us waltz, of course," she cries impetuously. "Waltz, like other *civilized* people, or walk about, or sit down. Why in the world, Sir Christopher, are we making ourselves so ridiculous?"

They waltz — they waltz to perfection. Can Jeanne help it that, though her spirit be heavy, her step is buoyant? Her peasant hat is slung across her arm, the Raphael red hair hangs loose and shining round her throat. A light, whose fountain source a less vain man than Sir Christopher might fail to guess at, is in her dark, imploring eyes.

"If Badenweiler were at the Antipodes,'twould be worth the journey to have one such dance," he whispers, when the fiddling dies into silence. "It is not waltzing, as we in London know the word—'tis music turned into motion. A man as old as Methuselah, as gouty as the Duke of Beaulais, would have life put into him by such a partner. Yes, Miss Dempster, a couple of turns with you would put fire into a stone."

As he indulges in this bold and original trope, they pass out of the ballroom into the *erkerweg*, a trellised wooden veranda, overgrown with ja-

ponica, sweet-briar, and passion-flower that runs round two thirds of the Kursaal building. Wolfgang and Vivian, slowly pacing, side by side, in the warm hushed darkness, come across them.

"What are those vain regrets that you are indulging in, Sir Christopher?" cries Miss Vivash, looking sharply back at him across her shoulder. "Methuselah—the Duke of Beaujolais! Will experience never bring you beyond that first volume of the romance?"

"On the contrary, one has a foolish fancy for studying a new romance altogether," says Kit Marlowe readily. "A romance likely to leave one—for a change after too much of Zola and Daudet—with a good taste in one's mouth. And you?"

"We are spectators," says Wolfgang, before Vivian can reply. "Spectators looking on with quiet curiosity, while moths burn their wings, and children," he gives a momentary glance at Jeanne's flushed cheek, "their fingers."

Sir Christopher shakes his head gravely as the pair continue their walk; the master talking low and earnestly, as though his theme moved him—Miss Vivash listening with bent-down face, with an air, real or admirably dissembled, of half reluctant submission.

"I have not had over much experience of philosophers, personally," he observes. "And as yet, I can not say I have got to the stage of liking

them. 'Tis a taste, like that for olives or caviare, no doubt, that wants education. Still, Miss Dempster, I am sorry for your Herr Wolfgang. Whatever his sins of priggishness, or otherwise, the Teuton is too good for the evil quarter of an hour that lies before him."

"*My Herr Wolfgang!*" repeats Jeanne passionately. "Say Miss Vivash's Herr Wolfgang—anybody's Herr Wolfgang, rather than mine!"

"Ach, ist dass so? I have progressed, you see, in German, as well as in other accomplishments, since I came to Schloss Egmont. Miss Vivash's Herr Wolfgang, then, as you prefer the phrase, has an evil quarter of an hour in store for him. Let Miss Vivash's Herr Wolfgang take care of himself. You and I, little Jeanne, for our part, will burn our wings and our fingers just as badly as we choose!"

Jeanne answers not; and her companion, no greater coxcomb, probably, than his peers, regards her silence as an expression of consciousness. Sir Christopher's own heart begins to grow soft. Poor Jeanne, with her big dark eyes, her blushes, her dimples—she really is a charming little girl, red hair, doubtful English, and freckles notwithstanding. At any rate she is not a Beauty—a positive charm to a man who, like Kit Marlowe, has fallen madly in love with a Beauty reputation once, and outlived his madness!

Within thirty steps of the Kursaal is a lime

avenue, fragrant, though no longer crowned with the nectared sweetness of its bee-haunted July prime. Thither Sir Christopher leads his partner. No perceptible breath of wind stirs upon the earth's face ; but high among the trees little soft airs must be stirring, for you can hear the shivering of light boughs, the kissing of the leaves overhead. Flowers, shrubs, grass, send forth the pungent odor that prophesies on a sultry summer night of rain. The sky is low-hanging, black ; only the lamps hung at uncertain intervals, along the garden pathways, enable one to see one's way.

Jeanne is blinded somewhat, after the ball-room's brilliant light, it may be from some other foolish cause ; and her foot slips. Sir Christopher saves her from falling ; at the same time he gets possession of her hand, holds it tenderly for a moment or two, then draws it through his arm.

“ And ye sall walk in silk attire,
And siller ha'e to spare.”

So he sings with theatrical attitude and spirit ; the long perspective of avenue, the lamplit “ slips,” the distant Kursaal fiddles, heightening the dramatic effect of the scene.

“ Gin ye'll consent to be his bride,
Nor think of Donald mair.”

Sir Christopher's voice is not without a certain canary-like sweetness ; yet does its quality fit it

rather for music-hall burlesque or nigger melody than for pathetic ballad. And Jeanne begins to laugh.

Laughter and tears both lie nearer to the surface with her to-night than is their wont.

"Yes, I should like to have it out about that 'some one,'" says Sir Christopher, harking back to their ballroom conversation. "Your ambition, I believe, is bounded by five hundred a year pin-money, unlimited opportunities of going into debt—"

"And every two months a bonus in the shape of jewelry. The last few days have taught me the weighty influence of bracelets on human happiness. Don't forget the jewelry."

"It shall be put in the settlements, if you like. I can not speak fairer than that. Miss Dempster, when is it to be?"

He has an intention, Jeanne divines, of again taking possession of her hand! She snatches it quickly from his arm, and turning aside, buries her face amid the blooming odorous masses of a honeysuckle that overhangs the path. A horrible suspicion that Sir Christopher thinks her *in earnest* makes her flush hot with shame.

"If by 'settlements' you mean when you shall remember me in your will, sir, you may set about it as speedily as you like. Considering you are just ten years my senior, I shall be tolerably advanced in life before I come into my inheritance."

“Oh, wha would buy a silken gown
Wi’ a puir broken heart?”

“Jeanne,” cries Sir Christopher fervently, “are you crying? No! I could have sworn I heard a sob. Jeanne, don’t walk so quick,” for all this time she has been getting on steadily ahead, “and confess the truth. Is your gentle heart melting?”

He overtakes her; ere Jeanne has time to suspect, or contravene his design, steals his arm around her waist.

“Is your heart melting?” he repeats. “Does the thought of pin-money touch you? Speak; I can bear anything but suspense.”

“If I could have the pin-money without incumbrances,” she observed, “you would not have long to wait for my answer.”

“Meanwhile, my dear?”

“Meanwhile, Sir Christopher Marlowe, I think it would be quite as nice if you were to leave off speaking affectionately, and, please, could we not manage to walk farther apart? Surely, the path is broad enough for us both?”

But Jeanne’s opinions are not those of Sir Christopher Marlowe. He does not leave off speaking affectionately. Although the path is broad, they do not walk any farther apart.

“You have seen my character on one side only.” So, after a little space, he begins again.

“Naturally and logically you think me a fool.”

“I do not, indeed,” cries the girl, conscience-stricken. “On the contrary, I think in many things—oh, ever so many things—you are”—she stammers, casting about her for a word—“are very clever.”

“A clever fool! You are trying to let me down as easily as you can. I thank you for the intention. A fool, gifted enough, like Dundreary, to ask a widdle, forgetting the answer; to sing a mild comic song (music hall and water); whistle a waltz; lead a cotillon; and, generally, go through whatever monkey tricks may, as a professional funny man, be required of me by society. Yes, Jeanne, I am all this. I am something more. If a sweet, simple little girl gave me her love, I believe I am not such a fool but that I could keep it—ay, and wear it worthily.”

The sharpest pang of remorse she has ever known stabs Jeanne’s heart. A big lump rises in her throat. In another moment, unless she takes care what she is about, she will infallibly have promised to become Kit Marlowe’s wife.

“And ye sall walk in silk attire.”

“Unfortunately, you have been defectively educated. You do not care for silk attire, or siller, either. The question is—Donald. *Is* there a Donald in the case, Jeanne? You have only to

tell me so, and I withdraw. 'If she be not made for me, what care I,' et cetera. *Is there a Donald?*"

"I felt a drop of rain on my nose," answers Jeanne, vainly trying to escape from him. "One, two—we shall have a thunder-storm! Ange and Hans both predicted it when we started, and none of us brought our waterproofs."

"Rain, or no rain, I intend that you shall give me an answer. Is there," putting the question slowly and syllabically, "a Donald?"

"I don't know what you mean!" she exclaims, growing frightened. "Who is Donald? We have no people of that name in the Schwarzwald, and I think I would like to go back to the ballroom, if you please. It is raining in earnest, and Ange will not give me another hat before Michaelmas."

Sir Christopher moves a couple of steps away from her.

"You are a child," he remarks, somewhat coolly, "but you are old enough to know that what I say now is no joke. Oh, there is no rain to hurt. You can stay here long enough to give me an answer, without spoiling your ribbons. As you will not speak about third persons, as Donald's is to be a name tabooed, we will confine our thoughts to ourselves. Fräulein Jeanne, do you detest me?"

"Detest you—no!" she exclaims, with prompt

compunction. "Why, Sir Christopher, I should be a wretch if I were not very fond—I mean very grateful—I mean—"

"I believe I know better what you mean than you know yourself," interrupts Kit Marlowe, *sotto voce*.

"You, who always take my part, who never laugh at me—no, for even that first dreadful day at dinner, you laughed good-naturedly. And the time passes so quickly when we are together, and—"

"And we match in height! And our step, when we waltz. Janet, I say it, without vanity, you will never find any fellow, even among your beloved Germans, whose step suits you half as well as mine. Will you have me?"

Even as he speaks, comes a lightning flash, accompanied, rather than followed, by a very artillery of thunder; and then the rain, hot, deluging rain, the specialty of the Black Forest climate, begins to rush down in sheets. Jeanne and Sir Christopher creep under shelter of a lime tree, somewhat more thickly spreading than its fellows, and with the big drops falling in ever increasing volume on their heads, proceed with their "love scene."

"Will you have me?" repeats Sir Christopher, and pretty loudly; the rolling of the thunder, the incessant splashing of the rain, put amative whispers out of the question.

"I wish I could have an umbrella," says Jeanne, with a wretched attempt at a laugh. "An umbrella and a waterproof would be more to the point than silk attire just at present."

"We are not talking of silk attire ; and coquetry, let me tell you, child, does not sit well on you. Come ! There is no time to lose. A set of ribbons might not matter, but I will not ask you to catch a cold for my sake. Yes or no, Janet ?"

The light from a neighboring lamp gleams fitfully upon them at this juncture. Jeanne catches a glimpse of Kit Marlowe's roseate, dapper, most unlover-like face, and takes courage.

"Yes or no ? As if there could be any doubt as to my answer ! Yes, of course, a hundred times, yes. You are rich, Sir Christopher, and a Hochwohlgeboren. Could I be ignorant enough to say 'no' to a Herr Baron ? I, a pauper with one mark a week—that is the allowance Ange makes me, sir, and to find myself in gloves, collars, neckties, and the pastor's plate on Sundays."

"There *must* be a Donald in the case," says Sir Christopher, taking off his hat, and emptying out a pond of water from its brim. "Well, my dear, the day may arrive when he and you will discover that virtuous attachment is a snare ; and a cottage, vanity. If it does, and I am living, no matter how bald, and gouty, and prosy, come to me. You may, at least, promise that."

"And be your housekeeper, a new edition of

Ange, with account books that won't come straight, blue cap-ribbons, and flounces. Well, yes ; if the place is not already more suitably filled," says Jeanne, with significance, "I promise."

"What do you mean by more suitably filled?" cries Sir Christopher in a suddenly sobered voice.

"I mean—oh, I mean just what I say, sir," she answers innocently. "When your cousin, Lady Pamela, marries again, as in the common course of things she will, and you are left alone in the world, why, naturally, you will want a house-keeper, me or somebody else, to take care of you."

Sir Christopher Marlowe's face could not under any circumstances be tragic ; but at this suggestion of little Jeanne's, his expression turns black as the clouds above them. At no point of their love scene, such love scene as it was, did he look half so moved.

"My cousin, Lady Pamela, has a vast deal too much *nous* to take a second husband—after such an experience as her first ! And if she did, it would make no difference in our relations. Lady Pamela and I have grown up together, have quarreled, kissed and quarreled, like brother and sister, all our lives."

"Then of course, sir, if a second marriage was for Lady Pamela's happiness, her brother would not say nay?"

"Lady Pamela has a vast deal too much *nous*

to take a second husband," repeats Sir Christopher, the subject evidently not supplying him with any large stock of original ideas.

"At any rate," observes Jeanne, "you have my promise. When Lady Pamela is—amusing herself somewhere, in the world, as there must be no talk of a second marriage—and when you are old, prosy, gouty, and want a housekeeper, I will come to you."

"If you and Donald chance to have discovered, meanwhile, that you 'are not each other's affinities.'"

"How often must I tell you that I never in my life knew any one called Donald?"

Jeanne turns from him pettishly, then launches boldly forth into the rain.

"And how am I to know that Donald is not High Dutch for Wolfgang?" asks Sir Christopher, following in her steps. "Jeanne, my dear, I believe, after all this, we shall both die and worms eat us, but 'twill be from a pleurisy, take my word for it, not from love!"

They skirt as best they may under shelter of the lindens while shelter lasts. Then comes an open gravel space which must be taken by assault, and then, blinded, dripping, with sentiment blown and scattered to the winds, they find themselves under cover of the Kursaal veranda.

The venetians of the windows are up. Jeanne looks in : she sees, strikingly contrasted with her

own wet, disheveled condition, the beauties of the ballroom, pink, blue, and green, as they whirl round in the arms of spurred and epauletted partners. Lady Pamela and her Faust remain faithful to each other. Vivian is waltzing.

For an instant's space Jeanne does not recognize the Beauty's partner. She catches glimpses only of the training Derby white, of an upheld snowy wrist, a gleaming bracelet. An instant's space ! Then an opening in the crowd brings the faces of both dancers full before her. Vivian's partner is Wolfgang.

"Man proposes, but woman fulfills," says Sir Christopher Marlowe. "The serpent is beguiled of Eve. The philosophy of the Teuton has turned to foolishness."

CHAPTER XV.

THOSE HORRIBLE PHOTOGRAPHERS !

THE waltz, ere long, changes to a mazurka ; but Vivian and the master continue partners. Under pretext of reassuring Lady Pamela as to her safety, Jeanne has dispatched Sir Christopher into the ballroom ; and, sick in spirit, chilled, wretched in the flesh, she stands alone, screened from observation by the darkness, an outside watcher of the scene.

The sleek head of Beauty reposes on Wolfgang's shoulder—an attitude, let me say, not in vogue among the wives and daughters of the fatherland. His whispers make her smile as they glide round in swift, smooth unison with the music, the two the most noticeable pair of dancers in the room. Lady Pamela, cruelly abandoning her Faust, has taken pity on Kit Marlowe. The many-colored Fräuleins and their warriors gyrate merrily. Flute, violin, and bassoon play their loudest.

What cares the herd for the shorn lamb? What matters it to fifty or sixty wildly-spinning human creatures that one forlorn child should be breaking her jealous heart in the rain and darkness of the night?

All the sorrows, all the losses she has known during her little span of life crowd back, in this drear moment, on Jeanne's memory. The pink-cheeked doll—her first great anguish—who was fondly hushed to sleep in an August sun, and who “woke,” a ghastly heap of wax, blonde wig, sawdust, and eyes! The wounded robin she nursed so tenderly, and who obstinately declined either to sing songs in his cage or to recover! The tortoise-shell cats, a long-doomed race, who used to vanish, generation after generation, by violence or treachery from her arms! What is life, she thinks, attaining in a leap to Solomon's philosophy, but loss? Loving passionately to-day that

which shall be empty air to-morrow, and discerning meaning neither in our love nor in our loss ?

A fear, the ghost of a suspicion, rather, flashes across her that in the last half hour she has acted like a fool ; honestly, it may be, according to the notions she once had of such matters, but like a fool—has taken happiness (or what might have passed very decently well for happiness) between her two hands, and wantonly thrown it—as a child disappointed of the moon throws its toy—away from her.

Sir Christopher Marlowe is young, accomplished, likable ; better than all, Sir Christopher Marlowe is rich. When Jeanne first heard Lady Pamela discourse of high-stepping horses, Paris milliners, good dinners, well-looking partners, she remembers that she listened with a kind of envy ; felt that in herself were as keen capabilities for pleasure as in any Lady Pamela, any Hyde Park goddess of them all. As Sir Christopher Marlowe's wife, whatever else were piteously wanting, these things, at least, had lain to her hand. For the sake of what vain dream has she rejected them—her master's love, perhaps, her master's fidelity !

Jeanne Dempster has not far to seek, she has not long to wait, ere that question be practically answered.

A covered pathway, or veranda, extends, as I have said, round two thirds of the Kursaal.

On the north side, where Jeanne stands, this veranda is sheltered; the newly-risen southwest wind bearing away the rain as it descends from the steep, tiled roof above, in sheets. The air is sweet with the thousand odors that the silent chemistry of summer rain distils from thirsty, grateful earth. It has grown cool, almost keen; and when the mazurka is finished a score or so of men and girls come forth to enjoy the freshness of the night—perhaps to exchange a little whispered sentiment beyond the watchful ken of chaperon or of rival.

Two of the number linger longer than the rest, Wolfgang and his partner. At first Jeanne feels secure from observation, expecting at every moment to see them reënter the ballroom with the crowd. Presently, Miss Vivash, it would seem, taking the initiative, they extend their walk along the more dimly lighted portions of the veranda. They approach nearer and nearer, and Jeanne's breath comes thick. Hemmed in on all sides but one by storm and darkness, what choice has she left but to hide herself? A thickly-trellised screen of ivy shuts off the veranda from the garden at two or three yards' distance, and behind this, her heart beating loud and fast, she creeps.

Miss Vivash and Wolfgang stop short. She can see their faces distinctly; with morbid acuteness, born of jealousy, every faculty concentrated on one sense, can hear each word they utter more

clearly than she ever heard human speech at any prior moment of her life.

"Yes," observes Beauty, in her lowest, languidest tones, evidently in reply to some remark of Wolfgang's. "Jeanne is, no doubt—er—diverting, in her way, quite a curiosity—ah—for those who appreciate the kind of thing! I don't know that I have much taste for unearthly, Top-sy-like children, myself. Time, perhaps, and experience, may give the creature feeling. I remember being told by a celebrated author at a dinner—you can understand the celebrities all trying to get next *me*—that the one gift a writer might attain by practice was originality, just what the crowd and Dogberry would say comes by nature. It may be the same with heart."

How differently Vivian talks with no member of her own sex near! Her mind seems to have taken up new thoughts, her very voice to have acquired new modulations.

"Whatever Jeanne's faults may be, I should certainly not reckon want of heart among them," says the master.

"No? Well, with your discernment of character you are pretty certain to be right. (And I fear you are awfully discerning, Mr. Wolfgang! I often tell Lady Pamela I could not keep a secret hid from you.) Besides, you know Jeanne so very much better than I do. And I'm sure," with a sigh, "one should be charitable, when one remem-

bers one's own failings. Naturally, at her age, the enjoyment of the moment, the love of change and attention are everything. It requires an education to teach one to suffer! Yes, and to go through that teaching thoroughly, to learn how to feel, and at the same time to know the madness of feeling, a life of the world, such as mine, is needed!"

She rests her elbows on the balustrade of the veranda; then lightly bows down her cheek on her clasped hands. The attitude is charmingly photographic; well considered, well executed. It brings every best point of Vivian's face into relief. It brings Vivian herself, through a quick, scarcely perceptible change of position, a foot or so nearer to the master.

Jeanne bethinks her of her own plainness. Convulsively clasping a fold of her drenched skirt within her hands, she realizes the contrast that exists at this moment between her rival and herself: Vivian in her shining white silk (that does duty, like some clap-trap sentiments, for fresh, by lamp-light); with her fair, calm face, her trained low voice, her self-command—and she, Jeanne, rough, ill-dressed, graceless, with her heart on fire, with her cheeks, at no time alabaster, burning under the mingled influence of rain, wretchedness, and tears!

Happily she is well hidden out of sight, and likely to remain so. The night continues dark as

Erebus. The lovers, if lovers they be, are too thoroughly engrossed in themselves, and in their own hopes and fears, to pay attention to shadows.

"No man knows where his neighbor's shoe pinches," says Wolfgang somewhat skeptically. "Judging only from the surface of things, I should not say that suffering and Miss Vivash had made intimate acquaintance. Has there been one crumpled rose-leaf, half a one—"

"In the velvet-piled couch fate has given me to repose on?" Vivian interrupts; and, lifting her face, she gives him a very full gaze, then hastily turns away. "Even in your life, Mr. Wolfgang, even in the wilds of Germany, you may have heard," actually there is an approach to a blush upon her cheek, "that I am—or was, for, if my friends say true, my reign is over—that unfortunate product of civilization called by the loungers at London club doors, 'A Beauty'?"

"It is a fact to be divined, a story that needs no telling," says Wolfgang gallantly, yet with a certain coldness in his voice. "A man who has eyes to see, and a heart to feel, needs not the verdict of St. James's Street to confirm his taste."

"St. James's Street!" cries Miss Vivash, lifting up her head, and rapidly making good her retreat from the debatable land of sentiment. "Oh! You know more of London, then, than we have given you credit for, Mr. Wolfgang?"

"I know most of the world's capitals, from

the outside," he replies. "My business calls me to London yearly, a very different business, a very different London, to anything that comes within the experience of Miss Vivash."

"London is London. You must mix in some kind of society," she persists. "You must see the Exhibition surely, go to the theatres, read the papers? Whatever your occupation, if you have been in town during the last two seasons, you can scarcely have failed, one would think, to know *my* face?"

"Every one who has passed a Regent Street photographer's window must do that," answers Wolfgang evasively.

"Those horrible photographers! We talked just now of the education of pain. The number of times I have been forced to sit for my portrait may be set, I should hope, against a few of my sins."

"*Have been forced,*" repeats the master, italicizing the words somewhat pointedly. "I can imagine it coming among a fashionable Beauty's sorrows to be stared at by the mob, copied by the milliners, interviewed by correspondents of provincial newspapers. Surely, there can be no law in England compelling her to sit, against her will, to the photographers, and surely," adds Wolfgang, "there must be a law in England to restrain the photographers from making a traffic of her likeness."

It would seem that Miss Vivash desires not to pursue the question.

"I am sick of the name of Beauty, as I am sick of the whole life it involves," she exclaims, with pretty irrelevance—"mob, special correspondents, photographers, St. James's Street, and all. I am sick of being fed on sugar-candy, of being sprinkled with rose-water. I want the solid fire-side joys, that come to other people naturally." And as she says this, there is an unmistakable tremor in her voice. "I want to be as I was in pa's quiet little Devonshire village, only with one heart to care for me, one pair of eyes to look on me as a woman—not a London sight, like the infant hippopotamus at the Zoölogical, or Madame Tussaud's latest waxwork murderer."

She wants . . . to set her foot upon another neck! Sated though she declares herself to be of rose-water celebrity, the pastime of breaking simple hearts has not for certain lost its zest. She would enjoy the pain even of an obscure German professor, ere she dismiss him and his passion from her thoughts for ever. The greed of conquest has, in truth, reached a point in Vivian Vivash at which it becomes a moral disease. She lives only to be admired, honestly, if possible, but admired; and if a victim draw back, would overstep the limits of self-respect rather than see him break, scatheless, from her toils.

But Wolfgang's heart is tough. Surrender,

no doubt he will—yes, in this very forthcoming “evil quarter of an hour!” But not without a struggle. He knows most of the world’s capitals, from the outside, at least, possibly he may have learned a few of the world’s ways, in his day; have come across women of equal beauty with this one, and of equal worth!

“You talk of a little Devonshire village—how would the quiet of German country life suit you?” he asks, presently—“a game at six-and-sixty for your amusement in winter, three weeks of mineral-water drinking for your summer dissipation, and a good marital stocking on the knitting pins at all times—such a lot, let us say, as would fall to the mistress, did she exist, of Schloss Egmont?”

“Schloss Egmont? I should die, I should commit suicide, if I remained another six weeks in that hideous place!” In her desire to appease Wolfgang’s prophetic jealousy, Vivian allows herself for once to speak as she feels, without let or hindrance. “Those howling woods! Those poverty-stricken gardens! (The peasants are right, I am sure. Every kind of ghostly demon must inhabit them.) The suites of rooms, each more chill, more comfortless than the other! And the portraits, no doubt of faded Fraus von Egmont, on the walls! And the atrabilious drawing-room curtains! And the visits from the Frau Pastor! And Ange! And Jeanne!”

“And in another day or two, the society of Count Paul von Egmont, himself?” suggests Wolfgang, with emphasis. “Do not omit the part of Hamlet from the play.”

Miss Vivash hesitates; she trifles, coyly irresolute, with the bracelet on her wrist. In the hand of an expert coquette, silence is to speech what shadow is to light. She who understands it not is ignorant of the very chiaroscuro of her craft. Can a confession from the loveliest pair of lips extant rival in sweetness the avowal that silence masks, and that the vanity of man's nature can construe as he wills?

“I think,” so at last she speaks, in fluttering accents, and not trusting her eyes to meet Wolfgang's, “that for once, for this night only, as the acting people say, it would refresh one to speculate, like Maud Müller, on the pleasant might-have-beens of life! London and all the people belonging to it, Schloss Egmont and all the people belonging to it, do not, to my mind, come under the name of pleasant.”

“The happiest hours I have known have been spent within the four hideous walls, in the poverty-stricken gardens that surround Schloss Egmont,” retorts the master.

His voice reflects loyally the flood of strong feeling at his heart. Poor victim! Surely the end can not be far off, now. A man exchanging warm sentiments with Beauty, at such an hour,

in Beauty's present plastic mood, must have advanced tolerably far along the road to execution!

"The happiest hours you have known have been spent at Schloss Egmont?" she repeats, with an air of bewitching consciousness. "Surely you do not reckon any of the hours you have spent there, *lately*?"

"Quite lately, Miss Vivash. Now, in fact, during this present month of July."

"And alone, of course; alone, with your own thoughts, or with those wild books of German poetry, that must so delightfully take you out of this dull prosaic world! Schiller and Heine," (one feels unwillingly convinced that Beauty's sculptured lips say Heine), "and the rest! Oh, Mr. Wolfgang," impulsively, "those are just the higher interests that *I* need! Pursuits, studies, some one of superior mind to guide me, to save me from myself! I'm sure I don't know how I dare speak in this open way, but you seem so like an old and valued friend that I take courage. Tell me, you don't quite disbelieve in me—you think there may be better capabilities in me than anything my artificial life of frivolity has called forth?"

And as though swayed irresistibly by some current of strong feeling, she rests a white hand, for a couple of seconds or more, on Wolfgang's arm.

As a bit of acting, the impulse is excellent.

Jeanne has not been over much affected by the stock sentiment, the carefully learned glances and attitudes of the love-struck Duchess of Carrara. At this moment, words, gestures, alike struck off at white heat, she feels that her rival is an artist.

Is Wolfgang acting a part too?—a more serious one than Vivian's, but still a part, in which vanity rather than passion holds the master-place?

Alas! Such details matter not to Jeanne. *She* is nothing to him. And this picturesque situation, this sample of a reigning Beauty's everyday sensations, is the turning-point in her fate; just that! Standing here, metaphorically and literally, in the cold, a miserable, unwilling listener, Jeanne feels that all the best half of herself, her girlhood, light-heartedness, hope, have died a sudden, violent death; that from this hour forth she will be about on a level, as regards enjoyment of life, with Ange—or lower, perhaps, by reason of the interminable vista of days that stretch out gray and changeless before her!

The principal actors—in this farce, or tragedy—which?—move, ere long, away; and advancing a pace or two from the wet shrubs, out of the pouring rain, Jeanne resolves stoutly to hold her pain in check, to confront whatever immediate ordeal lies before her. But even this respite is brief. Before five minutes are over, Miss Vivash

and her companion return once more to their former position, and once more Jeanne is forced to listen.

That a climax of some kind has been reached during these five minutes, it needs but a glance at the two faces to discern.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOST LENORE.

THE master is moved beyond his wont ; ice-cold are the looks of Beauty. Her lips have lost their smiles, her brow wears the peculiar heaviness which at times prophesies what the goddess's face will be when the bloom of youth, the glow of conscious power, no longer lighten it.

“In spite of all your discouragement, I am afraid I shall continue to hope,” Wolfgang remarks, after a pause, and with a certain doggedness of tone.

“Wer zum ersten Male liebt,
Seið auch glücklos, ißt ein Gott ;
Aber wer zum zweiten Male,
Glücklos liebt, Der ißt ein Narr.

“Or to put it in English doggerel,

“The man by love betrayed
A god may be ;
Betray him a second time,
A fool is he !

"I am at an age, Miss Vivash, when a man does not willingly admit to himself that he has been made a fool."

Vivian shrugs her shoulders carelessly. The quotation may be lost upon her. She can scarce be so poor a physiognomist as to misjudge the expression of the master's face.

"Hope is a cheap amusement, Mr. Wolfgang." The remark, still more the tone in which it is made, savor of acrimony. "Unfortunately, there is too little of Micawber in my temperament for me to indulge in it. I see events and men (women also) as they are, and never expect anything to 'turn up' in life, but the disagreeable."

"And you extend these pessimist doctrines to other people? You positively refuse to see any future good in store for me? Remember, Miss Vivash, that, although all this may seem a farce to you, to me it is a matter of life and death."

She laughs; the little laugh of affected scorn Jeanne knows so well.

"Life and death dependent upon a girl's caprice! A girl with no other dowry—"

"Than youth, grace, sweetness," Wolfgang interrupts her. "You should look upon me with pity rather than contempt, Miss Vivash. If, as you make me suspect, I am a fool, I shall have to pay dearly for my folly, depend upon it—change, I shall not."

"You have my most sincere pity, my friend,"

answers Vivian, "as regards your past, your present, and your future—above all your future. Save us from our answered prayers! as some one or another wisely said."

"You do not hold to any old-fashioned doctrines about wedded happiness?" he asks.

"In the cooing of turtle-doves, the sweetness of barley-sugar temples? Well, yes. I dare say such things are pleasant enough—while they last!"

"And the love that comes when the cooing of turtle-doves, when barley-sugar temples, are things of the past?"

A gesture of Vivian's white hand expresses as much condensed cynicism as would spread over a dozen pages, printed small, of *La Rochefoucault*.

"I am not a sentimentalist, Mr. Wolfgang, once and for all. I am seasoned wood; I look at the world without blinkers. Every penniless love-match I ever took the trouble to watch, I have seen end in grief—naturally. How can it be otherwise? When people are married, each year they live brings heavier inevitable expenses on their shoulders. A woman's dress is costly in exact proportion to her age. (I went about in one gown," muses poor Beauty, "straight through the best balls of my first season. And all the fine ladies copied me! I know a great deal too much of human nature to go about in one gown now.) Then, unless the wife is a regular failure, she will

look forward constantly to being more invited out, to entertaining more, to having better equipages, richer jewels. Love! unless the husband has an ample balance at his banker's, how *can* love exist, I should like to know, amid the wear and tear of daily anxieties like these?"

"Are you administering a wholesome bitter—speaking in parable—for my good?" says Wolfgang. "Or do you, in earnest, believe that human life contains nothing of higher worth, of keener delight, than equipages, jewels, and invitation cards?"

"I believe," says Vivian, with an unstifled yawn, "that, unless one wants to be rheumatic for the rest of one's mortal days, it would be well to go back to the ballroom. What a climate!" Peeping forth, with a shudder, at the grand dark heavens, through whose dome, at one solitary point, a star already shines. "If this is a normal German July, what must December be like—a succession of Decembers, enlivened by six-and-sixty, Frau Pastors, and the eternal stocking? And to think there are thousands—for aught I know, millions—of sentient beings condemned to drone out their days, even by courtesy one can not say to *live*, in the Fatherland!"

She turn brusquely away, the master in dutiful attendance; and stiff, cramped, drenched to the skin, Jeanne Dempster crawls forth out of her place of concealment, and watches their departure.

That Wolfgang has declared his love, and been rejected, she accepts as a certainty, although the actual words of his declaration were unheard by her. That, in spite of Vivian's cold worldliness, he will continue faithful to his folly, she can not, dare not doubt. "Although to you this may seem a farce, to me it is a matter of life and death. Although I may be a fool, although I may have to pay dearly for my folly—change I shall not." Do not his own confessions shut out the possibility of disbelief?

Well, and let him be true or false, a fool or wise, Jeanne Dempster must live on, must brave a hundred human faces, now, in yonder lighted noisy Kursaal, and make no sign that the heart within her breast is dead!

She will not give herself time for cowardice. She stops not to consider what sensation her wet clothes, her tear-stained cheeks are likely to create among the pink-and-white beauties of the ball-room—nay, it seems to her that she derives a certain forlorn satisfaction from the sense of her own uncomeliness. Approaching nearer the light, she sees that the clock above the entrance of the Kursaal points to three quarters past ten. In another fifteen minutes the ball will be over; let her sick heart in this, at least, find a shade of comfort. The fiddlers, even now, are tightening their strings preparatory to the final dance. What are her chances of a partner? she asks herself,

ingeniously self-torturing, after the manner of the miserable. Wolfgang, Sir Christopher, thin-waisted, supercilious Baden officers—which among them all will come forward as the squire of the forlorn and draggled Cinderella, who is about to put in an appearance upon the scene?

She walks boldly past the range of windows, makes her way in (readily enough, when people discover the dripping condition of her raiment), through the crowded vestibule, and enters the ballroom. The first figure her eyes light upon is Miss Vivash. The beauty is talking with an air of confidence to Lady Pamela at the farther end of the saal. Wolfgang, looking pale and disturbed, stands apart, speaking to no one, near the door.

He sees his pupil in an instant, and crosses over to her side.

“Miss Dempster, my little Jeanne, this is a relief, indeed! But you are cold”; whether the girl repulse him or not, he rests his hand on hers. “You must be drenched to the skin in that light frock of yours. What, in Gottes namen, have you been doing, child?”

“I have been taking a lesson,” answers Jeanne, with a mighty effort, keeping her voice from quivering. “There are a few things to learn in the world, you know, sir, besides Euclid and Latin verbs.”

Wolfgang looks at her with unsmiling lips, with grave, mistrustful eyes.

“A singular kind of lesson that has kept you out in such weather, at such an hour of the night as this, and alone !”

“And suppose I was not alone ?” she answers curtly. “Suppose, until half an hour ago, that Sir Christopher Marlowe was good enough to be my companion ?”

“Sir Christopher !” repeats Wolfgang, glancing across the room at the Bond Street perfections of the little London dandy ; “why, Sir Christopher Marlowe would melt away bodily in one of our Black Forest thunder showers.”

“When one is in pleasant society, Mr. Wolfgang, the accidents of wind and rain may be forgotten, as you, surely, ought to know.”

Jeanne believes herself to speak with a tolerably successful show of flippancy. Something at any rate, in her tone or in her mention of Sir Christopher, produces an effect on Wolfgang.

“If Sir Christopher is ready to bear the blame, I, of course, may be silent,” he remarks, somewhat coldly. “Otherwise, as I shall have to answer to Mademoiselle Ange to-morrow for your illness—”

“Oh, my illness !” exclaims Jeanne, turning aside from him impatiently. “Do I look, the very least in the world, like a person who is going to be ill ?”

“You do not,” is Wolfgang’s reply ; “you look like a person who is ill already. Your poor little pinched face is white as death, with a crim-

son spot on either cheek ; your eyes are glassy, your lips blue."

"What a seductive picture !" cries Jeanne, this time with a laugh 'twould go to your heart to hear. "Who will offer himself as my partner, I wonder, for the next dance? for I *hope* I shall dance it ! I hope a day of such wild pleasure as this has been will wind up bravely !"

"I believe I am, or was, engaged, after a fashion," Wolfgang remarks, after glancing at a programme that hangs suspended from his button-hole. "But, if you will accept me, Miss Dempster, I am ready to forswear myself. You and I have never danced together, have we?"

"No, we have had the good fortune hitherto to find other partners," Jeanne answers bitterly. "It would be rather late in the day to mend now. Besides, sir, why should my conscience be made to bear the guilt of your perjuries?"

A glow of tell-tale indignation suffuses her face, her lips tremble. As Wolfgang watches her steadily, the dawning of some new, not unwelcome truth seems to break upon him.

"If I am ready to bear the guilt, myself," he whispers, "will you dance with me? It is never too late in the day to return to one's first—"

The sentence, unhappily for Jeanne's peace, remains a fragment. At this instant a suppliant for her hand, a victim to her drenched and mermaid charms, crosses the room, and with figure

bent at an acute right angle, with hands stiffly glued down to his sides, stands, after the manner of academy-taught cavaliers, before her.

“Kann ich die Ehre haben”—so in a sepulchral voice he addresses her—“Kann ich die Ehre haben, Gnädiges Fräulein?”

The new comer is an immensely tall, conspicuously ugly university student, distantly known, by reason of his kinship with the Katzenellenbogen family, to Jeanne and Ange; a Herr Graf possessing Tittel ohne Mittel, like most of the Schwarzwald nobles, and of lineage too high, of prejudices too stiff, to seek partners among the rosy-cheeked bourgeois daughters of Freiburg or Mühlheim. Three or four tolerably recent duel slashes traverse his cadaverous face; his flaxen hair—long and parted down the center of his head, like the hair of Ary Scheffer’s heroes—is drawn tightly behind his ears. He affects black gloves, too long in the fingers; shows an untold length of throat; wears Lord Byron collars, a white cravat, a cutaway riding coat, and spurs!

And Jeanne turns shortly aside from Wolfgang. With her passion-strung heart just prepared to overflow and relent, she smiles upon this saber-slashed apparition, as though he were a creature of light, rests her head with a little willing gesture on his arm, and resigns herself for the remainder of the evening to his guidance!

Lenore’s Death Galop is the music chosen for

the final dance : wildest, eëriest strains that ever entered into the heart of German composer to weave. The student glides an arm around Jeanne's wet waist, he shakes back his lint-white locks, holds his head aloft, extends his left hand horizontally in space, and in another moment they are off. One glimpse the girl catches of her master's grave face as he watches them depart ; one glimpse she has of Vivian, looking on at the little scene with chill composure, with half-closed, indifferent eyes ; and then until the galop is finished, during the space of a dozen or more mad minutes, she sees no more.

The Bohemian bandsmen play quick, even according to their national ideas of dancing speed. The strides of the specter student outstrip their strains. Once only in Jeanne Dempster's life before has she experienced such velocity—once, at the age of seven, when her nurse allowed her the supreme bliss of a whirl in a merry-go-round at Freiburg Fair. No matter that her limbs feel heavy, that her breath comes thick. Fast, faster, in her wet clothes, with jealous despair, cold and sick at her heart, she is borne.

“ Und immer weiter, hop, hop, hop !
Ging's fort, in fausenden Galopp.”

The music is of the order styled descriptive. To Jeanne's overwrought vision it seems that she is actually following the death ride of Lost Le-

nore. The Rapp Rapp of the ghostly cock-crowing, the hurras of fleshless Wilhelm, the Hu Hu of the pursuing skeletons—she hears them all; now shiveringly low, now wildly shrieked forth by the topmost notes of clarionets and horns.

Not once does the long-limbed student pause for breath!

Quick ride the dead; he follows their example. The plumed and ribboned haus-mutters who line the ballroom walls turn into charnel crowds before Jeanne's excited imagination. She feels faint! She glances up in vain appeal to her partner!

He carries no scythe and hour-glass; the flesh as yet has not fallen from his bones, as it fell from Wilhelm's, but his cadaverous complexion waxes paler and paler as they fly; the saber wounds show ghastlier.

“Und immer weiter, hop, hop, hop!
Ging's fort, in fausenden Galopp.”

Sick and reeling, Jeanne is kept on her legs to the last: when the final crash of fiddles has spent itself, is dropped, not like hapless Lenore into a living grave, but among a feather-bed group of dowagers on an ottoman, and there left to come back to consciousness as she may.

Through all the future nightmare of her life, whenever her brain shall be in a condition to shape sinister memories into evil dreams, that

Lenore galop, played by the Badenweiler band, danced with her specter student partner, must, of a surety, come to the fore.

CHAPTER XVII.

EFFACED.

To the mind of any legitimate heroine the propriety of falling ill must, at this point of Jeanne Dempster's career, present itself. A recreant lover, a successful rival, a thunderstorm and a wetting, are circumstances to which, about the end of the second volume, no heroine with a decent sense of the responsibilities of her position could fail to succumb. Will not the process of sickening fill a hundred pages, her convalescence another hundred, her last hours, or the lover's reconciliation—according to whether the romantic taste of the hour inclines toward good or “bad endings”—a third!

Jeanne is emphatically not a heroine; no, not even the heroine proper of this little history; and the sequel to her Badenweiler adventures is commonplace, exceedingly. She awakes next morning sound as a bell, in health, not an ache in head or limb, not an accelerated beat of the pulse, but with her voice gone.

Elsbeth, coming into the girl's chamber, accord-

ing to custom, soon after sunrise, is accosted with a "Guten Morgen" hoarse as the utterance of a strangled raven, and summons Mamselle Ange, in haste, upon the scene. An inspection of Jeanne's frock and shoes reveals the state in which she returned home last night from her day's merry-making, and the sentence pronounced upon her is brief. She shall remain in her bed, drink hafer-schleim, and take aconite globules until her voice returns ; yes, although twenty private theatricals, although the home-coming of twenty Counts von Egmont, were imminent.

Nearly all pulmonary disorders, says Ange oracularly, as though she were on the rostrum of a lecture-room, begin in the throat. If Jeanne's throat be not affected, her hoarseness must arise from the bronchia (second only to her proficiency in matters doctrinal does Ange rate her own knowledge of the human frame) ; if not from the bronchia, worse still, from the lungs. In any case she shall remain prisoner, if refractory, be visited by the Herr Doctor Gregorius, from Freiburg, and as the Herr Doctor's first order would be to shut every window in the house, his second to pile the patient high in feather-bed counterpanes, and the third to make her swallow gallons of Linden-bluthen Thee, Jeanne obeys : not, perhaps, without a lurking curiosity as to the emotions that shall be awakened in the different members of the Egmont Incapables by her absence.

“It is nothing catching—you give me your assurance that it is going to be nothing catching?” So, toward midday, she hears Vivian holding parley with Ange outside the door. “Of course, if one had even a suspicion of fever, or diphtheria, or anything of the kind, it would be right to have the girl removed out of the house at once. Nothing in the world I have such a horror of as contagion. Now, I do rely on you, I may venture in with safety?”

And, holding a handkerchief saturated with essences to her nose, the Beauty enters the room, seats herself gingerly at about a foot distant from the door, and desires that both the windows may be set open in order to ensure a draught above the patient’s head.

If little Jeanne were suffering from plague, pestilence, and famine combined, Miss Vivash could not show more prompt and tender solicitude—for her own safety!

“I hear, through Evans, you have lost your voice, Jeanne, and really you might have had a little more consideration, as I had agreed to your attempting a leading part! A radical change of characters will be the only measure open to us. Now, do you mean to tell me you can not speak at all?”

Faintly Jeanne tries to answer that she supposes, if she take very good care of herself, that she may get her voice back by to-morrow, grow-

ing exceedingly hot and red as she makes the effort.

Vivian recedes hastily in the direction of the door.

“To me you appear feverish, disagreeably feverish ; the same kind of red swollen look round the eyes that you had last night when you were dancing ! I do hope I am running no risk in coming here, the medical men all declare that I have such an exquisitely sympathetic organization ; ‘sensitive as iodine to light,’ the great Sir Leo Smith has been known to say of me ! Are you sure you have had the common childish complaints, measles, nettle-rash, whooping-cough ? ”

“I have never had *small-pox*,” gasps Jeanne hoarsely ; and yet with sufficient malicious distinctness to make the color fade from Beauty’s cheek.

“Small-pox ! Horrors ! ” she ejaculates, gathering her skirts around her with a gesture of affright.

“Small-pox ! Fiddlesticks ! ” cries Ange, crossing over to the girl’s pillow. “Jeanne was vaccinated when she first came under my care, as a baby, and again at fourteen. Not that revaccination is much of a protection from the disease. I recollect a laundry-maid of my dear mother’s dying of it, who had been vaccinated regularly (or who said she had, for sad things were found out afterward as to her character, and we knew

her to be unreliable about the starch) every seven years. If you are frightened of these things, Miss Vivash, you go the straightest road toward catching them. Every one remembers about the prisoners and the cholera beds, though *I* call it murder ! Cause of science or no, such an experiment should never have been made in a Christian country ; and as to Jeanne's illness, why, her temperature is normal ; feel her hand, if you want to convince yourself how much fever the child has about her."

Miss Vivash does not avail herself of this offer. She continues on the extreme edge of her chair, ready if need be for instant flight. She watches the patient's face in silence. Something in Jeanne's expression would seem, after a time, to reassure her.

"Of course, we shall have to arrive at a decision one way or the other," she observes with meaning. "That is what I came here to tell you. The theatricals are fixed for Saturday, to-morrow. Will you be well enough to take your part, or will you not ?"

Jeanne whispers to Ange, who repeats aloud, for Vivian's benefit, that she hopes to take her part if she gets her voice back sufficiently.

"Oh, but 'ifs' and 'hopes' don't do in emergencies of this kind," interrupts Vivian coolly. "You must decide positively, and at once, whether you will have voice enough to act or not. Mr.

Wolfgang comes over to a dress rehearsal this evening." Jeanne feels the pale eyes rest on her with cruel significance at mention of the master's name. "If Laura does not choose to put in an appearance, I as stage manager must decide what shall be done in Laura's absence."

"I think it would be generous—I think you might fairly give me four-and-twenty hours' grace," utters Jeanne, with an effort. Ange, just at this moment, has been called out of the room by Elspeth on kitchen business, leaving the poor child to confront her enemy alone. "I got hoarse last winter, I remember, after the New Year's Philharmonic Concert, and it went off after twenty-four hours, and—"

"And if 'it' does not go off? If 'it' turns, as I more than suspect will be the case, to something horrible and dangerous, what then? Do you suppose that a substitute can be found, programmes changed, dresses made up, at the last moment? Remember the hundred and fifty guests, and the twenty pairs of chickens," says Vivian playfully; "remember the salmon from Geneva, and the pies from Strasburg, and the thunder in the air! With all the dramatic ability in the world you can not act two parts at once, my dear, the interesting invalid and the Maid of Honor, as well. It is for you to decide which you prefer!"

"I am not an invalid," gasps Jeanne, growing hoarser and hoarser; "I am not interesting, to my-

self or anybody else, and I do not mean to break up the theatricals. I mean to get back my voice, and act, and—”

“Well, as far as breaking up the theatricals goes,” interrupts Beauty—“you don’t mind my speaking quite plainly? I thought not—as far as breaking up the theatricals goes, nothing would conduce more to our success than for Lady Pamela, as I said from the first, to take the Maid of Honor. Your dress could be made to fit her—I presume you meant to wear the costume you put on one night for our edification? and Sir Christopher would take the part of Laura, alias the Count Cesario.”

“Sir Christopher would take the part of Laura!” repeats little Jeanne, raising herself up on her elbows in her amazement.

“Yes. Capital proposal, is it not? Sir Christopher is quite too irresistible dressed as a girl—female characters are his forte. He would bring the house down with every word, and mock flirtation between him and Lady Pamela, when Laura has disguised herself in male attire, would have a piquancy. I more than half regret, positively, that I did not keep Giulia for myself. This would only leave the part of the Grand Chamberlain vacant. Very likely Mr.—Mr.—what is the Freiburg teaching man’s name?—Wolfgang might find some one among his pupils to take it?”

At this mention of Wolfgang, at the inten-

tionally impertinent hesitation with which his name is drawled forth, Jeanne's cheeks flame. She starts up in her bed, she looks at Miss Vivash fixedly.

"It is a thousand pities for himself that the Freiburg teaching man ever had anything to do with us or our theatricals!" so she breaks forth, indignation, for the moment, lending her voice a certain husky strength.

"Oh, come, come, this will never do ; you are working yourself into a fever," interrupts Vivian, rising languidly, and with a manner implying that the argument remains with her. "Drink plenty of water gruel, my dear, or whatever paraphrase of water gruel exists in Teuton land, keep yourself cool and collected, and be quite sure we will arrange everything for the best. Remember the adage of the nursery ! Master Jacky can not eat the cake and have it." This is discharged as a parting shot ere she quits the room. "*You would* run about the wet gardens, yesterday, rehearsing ingénue scenes with Sir Christopher (burning your fingers, as your master sagely forewarned you). *You would* overdance yourself with Byronic saber-scarred German nobles, and to-day comes retribution. So are our pleasant sins ever paid for. Champagne may triumph over night. Repentance and soda water prevail in the morning."

The Beauty's tone betrays more undisguised

active rancor than usual ; at which, in her ignorance, Jeanne marvels. Can it be that Vivian holds her last night's triumph incomplete? that Wolfgang, although vanquished, did not yield the full measure of incense which her slakeless thirst for conquest craves after? Does the acrimony of tongue betray some lurking sense of failure—failure whereof, rightly or wrongly, she holds Jeanne's insignificant self to be the cause?

Ample leisure has Jeanne Dempster for meditation ere this weary July day be done. Sick and impatient at heart, she watches the sun creep inch by inch along her chamber-wall ; she hears the lagging hours strike drowsily on St. Ulrich's clock ; she listens to the trickling of the trout-stream, the wail of the wood-doves, the sougning of the forests. Alas ! and for the first time since she was born, sunshine palls upon her ; the sounds of stream and forest have lost their tune. For the first time she realizes the meaning of *life*, as the old, the sick, the sorry—the whole army of martyrs, in countless thousands—are obliged to know and to bear it ! Is this one day's forced inaction a fitting prelude to the long list of days to come? Does this sudden distaste of sweet, familiar joys accurately strike the key-note of the future that lies before her?

She will not become as Mamselle Ange is ! The blood of a keener-strung race, the moral fiber of a more restless generation, are in her. She will

not tone down to a cheerful, garrulous state of vegetation—the flavor of raspberry vinegar, or the clearness of calves'-feet jelly for a high-water mark of duty ; a game of six-and-sixty, a gossip “ behind the stove ” with the Frau Pastor for pleasure.

Neither will she be as one of the Fräuleins Katzenellenbogen ! Pinched spinsters, who, after sighing through a sentimental youth, console themselves as they go down the gray slopes of middle age with the remembrance of their father's sixteen quarterings of nobility ; with the half-yearly attendance at Residenz levées ; with torturing an unhappy white slave, their *dame de compagnie* ; with lapdogs, Viennese sugar-plums, provincial scandal, and French novels.

As she has sown, or rather, as the iron hand of circumstances has sown for her, so shall she reap. Seventeen years of a child's automatic contentment, a few summer weeks of awakening, a little reading of Heine's verse, a few brief, passionate hopes, some poignant hours or days of pain, and then—all is over ! To satisfy a coquette's caprice, happiness torn roughly out of her grasp ; fifty or sixty loveless years—centuries to the hot, onward-looking spirit of youth—to be existed through.

Jeanne exists through the prelude, through the interminable stretch of July hours, as best she can. Evening brings her a faintly brightening

prospect of release. Her hoarseness abates ; her voice begins to strengthen. Not Ange's threats of the Herr Gregorius, not Miss Vivash, not fate itself, shall hinder her from taking her part in the theatricals, if this improvement lasts. Her heart may be *broken* ; she will wear her brocaded silk, her Valencia lace above the fragments ; will cover the traces of tears with rouge and rice-powder, will show a brave front before Wolfgang, before Vivian, before the whole world, to the last.

So Jeanne tells herself : reckoning without an influence more potent than the Herr Doctor's prescription, mightier far than the sneers of Beauty, or than the irony of Fate !

"Mr. Wolfgang thinks that we have recast the piece to admiration," cries Lady Pamela, bursting unceremoniously into the girl's room, a little after sunset. "We have been running it all over without you, Jeanne, and we are just going to light the foot-lights, if they will light, and begin the dress rehearsal, now. You don't hear our voices, I hope ? That is right. It would be such a sin to disturb you. My dear child, I wish you could see us ! Sir Christopher as Laura, *alias* Cesario, is inimitable. I give up my Hessians to him without a sigh, the more readily, perhaps, when I remember that sweet little *poudre* dress of yours ! You will let me run away with it now, won't you ? Too short in the skirts ?" (This, as poor Jeanne attempts to put in a feeble

protest.) "Oh, ankles will not matter for rehearsal, and Evans can add a flounce to-morrow, if strictly necessary. I suppose I shall find it all in the wardrobe, yonder?"

And ere Jeanne can collect herself sufficiently for resistance, the costume of the village Marchioness, carefully laid ready, with every adjunct of lace and furbelow and ribbon, is in Lady Pamela's hands.

"Pink and azure! Not quite the colors for an *ingénue* of nine-and-twenty. However, I must trust to bistre for my downcast eyelids, and to carmine for my modesty. It seems a shame, I must say, child" (testing a knot of ribbon against her complexion), "a crying shame that you should have none of the fun. But one must think of the guests, and the supper, and the programmes. There will be only just time, if we send to Baden to-night, to get the names altered. As Mr. Wolfgang says, it is one of those things that can not be left an open question."

"As Mr. Wolfgang says?" repeats Jeanne, feeling her powers of utterance growing stronger and stronger. "Mr. Wolfgang is extremely good, to interest himself in my concerns, and I have no doubt his recasting of the piece is admirable. But I mean to act my part. I mean to wear my dress. I mean my name to remain where it stands in the programme."

With the close of each firm, staccatoed sen-

tence, Lady Pamela's face falls lower and lower. She is as generous, as little selfish, as the blood that runs in her veins will allow. *But the blood runs there.* Grapes must no man ask from this-tles, nor pretty feeling more durable than powder on the wing of a butterfly from Lord Vauxhall's granddaughter. Would not poor Lady Pamela, with her half-cynical, half-pathetic outspokenness, be herself the first to tell you so? Hard, doubtless, for a child of Jeanne's age to forego promised pleasure; but life altogether (who knows it better than Lady Pamela Lawless?) has a trick of being hard on most of us, and, if none piped while others wept, where were a good two thirds or more of the world's cheeriest piping?

"You think, really and truly, that there is a chance of your being well enough to act by to-morrow? I understood from Miss Vivash—" she is beginning—

"There is every chance of my being well by to-morrow," interrupts Jeanne; "the more so as I am just as well as I ever was—my hoarseness, even, gone—at this moment. As to Miss Vivash," she continues hotly, "Schloss Egmont, as yet, is not under Miss Vivash's rule. Neither am I!"

Lady Pamela tosses down Jeanne's brocades and laces on the nearest chair that comes to her hand.

"Then the theatricals, to my mind, had best be given up," she exclaims, with considerable ill

humor ; “just as we had every prospect, too, of assured success. . . . The scenes between Sir Christopher and myself would be perfect, naturally ! Kit Marlowe and I have been acting together all our lives—and, as Mr. Wolfgang says, the play, as art, is a vast deal better with the Grand Chamberlain struck out. But, of course, if people are determined, they are determined.”

Jeanne does not contradict this profound aphorism. A feeling deeper than balked vanity, sharper than regret over a few hours' frustrated pleasure, holds her dumb.

Taking the girl's silence as a hopeful earnest of coming surrender, Lady Pamela runs on volubly :

“I am quite as disappointed for you as you can be for yourself. You would make a delightful little Maid of Honor, in your patches and powder—although a trifle grave, perhaps ! a character in one of the Tyrolese Passion plays might suit your coloring better—and if you like to wear your dress for the dances afterward, I don't mind giving it up to you a bit. (Indeed, I more than suspect I look better in my own crimson and silver.) A heavenly notion, is it not, of utilizing Evans ? Oh, I forgot, you were not present at the conclave. Mr. Wolfgang deserves the whole credit of the idea. The Grand Chamberlain is to be effaced bodily, my dear, and Evans introduced as a dumb crambo page, to bow us all in and off

the scene. We thought you would not care for a page's dress—doublet and hose, etc.? No, Mamselle Ange was sure you would not. So Mr. Wolfgang suggested Evans—Evans, amid whose manifold faults that of ultra-prudishness can *not* be reckoned.”

“I—I think I begin to see how matters stand,” remarks Jeanne, after a minute's reflection—a minute during which months, years of pain seem, prospectively, to cast their shadows across her heart. “It was Mr. Wolfgang's idea, you say, that the Grand Chamberlain's part should be struck out. From Mr. Wolfgang, also, came the suggestion, no doubt, that my name should be effaced from the programme?”

Lady Pamela draws forth a folded slip of paper from her waist-belt.

“A tender billet-doux, of which Mr. Wolfgang asked me to be the bearer. Nay, never turn so red, child; I can be discreet on occasion, let alone that the billet is written in an unknown tongue! Mr. Wolfgang feels sure, he says, that the missive will put an end to all our difficulties.”

And this is what the missive contains—two lines written, in German, in the rapid, firm hand Jeanne knows so well:

“MY LITTLE PUPIL: Do me a favor—the second favor I have asked of you—give up your part in the theatricals.
WOLFGANG.”

“Well!” cries Lady Pamela, with scarcely veiled impatience. “What is your ultimatum? Is Evans to make her appearance in hose and doublet, or—”

“You will do as you like—let Mr. Wolfgang and Miss Vivash decide everything as they choose,” cries Jeanne, with a firm lip, a steady color. “The play will go on better without me, and I—am only too glad to be a spectator, not an actor.”

“And I may really take possession of your dress?” cries Lady Pamela, with tardy compunction, but suiting the action to the word. “I vow this is all too bad. If it were not for my sense of honesty toward the public, I should be tempted to scratch my own name, too. Brocaded petticoat, bodice, fan! Yes” (examining her borrowed plumes critically), “all the materials are here, and the only item wanting will be a face of seventeen to set them off. A pity you could not lend me that as well, Jeanne! A face of seventeen, and the heart that belongs to it.”

“You would pretty soon find that you had the worst of the bargain,” answers Jeanne Dempster sorrowfully.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IM WALD.

SATURDAY comes, and Schloss Egmont, from morn till dusk, is astir with feverish preparation.

Mamselle Ange's faculties, like those of a general in battle, seem to quicken, her perceptions to clear, under the pressure of immediate action. She remembers her own orders for at least five minutes at a time ; keeps her keys in her basket, keeps her cap on her head ; and, ably seconded by the Frau Pastor Meyer, contrives ubiquitously to render miserable the life of every serving person, male and female, throughout the Schloss.

The London visitors, a hasty one-o'clock meal swallowed, appear no more ; so intent is each member of the Bernstein Incapables upon wigs, rouge, patches, false eyebrows, paste diamonds, and sentiments to correspond ! Mistress Evans haunts the staircases in picturesque disarray—Mistress Evans, amid whose manifold faults that of ultra-prudishness can not be reckoned—with pinching-irons, perukes, plumes, Hessians, and other theatrical properties in her hand. Incessant hammering resounds from the saal, where the village carpenters, tardy to the last, bestow final touches on foot-lights, slips, and drop-scenes. A rich dramatic flavor of oil and sawdust, intensi-

fied by culinary whiffs from kitchen and larder, fills the atmosphere.

As evening approaches, the avenue leading to the Schloss begins to fill with working-people ; the women in their Sonntagschleife, holiday petticoats, smart kerchiefs, full white sleeves and silver jewelry ; the men in gayly buttoned jackets, slouched felt hats, and long plush waistcoats, *à la Grandison*. Grave are they all of demeanor, silent, dignified, as the guests at a court concert.

“A stone-mason’s bill can make poor amends for a broken heart.”

. . . . The Black Forest peasant is by nature stolid, a human creature chary of speech—save at rare vinous intervals—reticent of memory. And the story of Wendolin’s Malva has long been a household word throughout the district. Paul von Egmont will receive welcome to his father’s house, among his own people. The sunshine of a dozen Julys has not effaced from men’s memories the winter morning when Paul von Egmont’s sweetheart was laid to rest among new-fallen snows—not whiter than the maiden’s own fair name—in St. Ulrich’s churchyard.

And Jeanne—how fares it with her ?

Alone, among the festive preparations, is Jeanne Dempster, dull, unexpectant, a spectator, not an actor in the play. She helps, with mechanical show of interest, as long as her help is wanted ; assists the Frau Pastor in garnishing

the supper-table with flowers ; writes out the tickets for the cloak-room ; is called upon, more than once, to aid Mistress Evans in her green-room labors. A tuck must be run here ; some plaits are wanted there. As she, Jeanne, is not going to act, surely she would find it an amusement to take in hand the crimping of Beauty's wig, to play prompter while Kit Marlowe and Lady Pamela run over one or two of their most telling love-scenes ? And then there are the programmes. As the Ugly Duckling has no part to rehearse, no details of dress upon her conscience, would she kindly affix pencils to one hundred and fifty pink programmes, with ribbon—*and neatly ?*

Only when the sun has begun to sink is Jeanne free to steal out to the Wald, sharer of her childish joys, confidant, during the past summer weeks, of sweetest, most golden, most fallacious dreams. Alas ! and the Wald comforts her not. We receive from Nature as much as we bring to her ; ounce for ounce. Nature gives back faithfully ; she does not modify our moods. Jeanne Dempster has, hitherto, been content to live without horizons. The environment of pine-girt mountains, the bounded vistas of closely columned forest have brought to her, as they bring to every true child of the Wald, a sense of liberty rather than imprisonment. In this hour, her feverish heart yearns for a wider outlook, a freer breathing-space. Taught by the same instinct that in-

formed Dr. Johnson's "Rasselas," she feels that she needs more than the Schwarzwald can yield; would fain overstep the Blauen tops and enter upon a world alien to Schloss Egmont, uncolored by her personal hopes and disappointments.

The village Kirchhof, with its pair of giant yews, its crowd of low black crosses, stands on a sandy mound among the fir-woods. From the steps of the little Chapel of the Dead you may see the blue Vosges Mountains above the Rhine plain, may even, in fair weather, catch a glimpse of the white-gleaming Strasburg Cathedral spires. Thither Jeanne makes her way; her face down-bent, her step slow and unelastic. Late summer though it be, the Wald orchestra is not dumb. Although their second broods are on the wing, the ousel and goldhammer pipe a blithe duet; the woodpecker taps his castanet accompaniment on the branches; at intervals the crake calls softly from a neighboring patch of yellowing corn.

Jeanne bethinks her of the July evenings, years ago, when she and blind Lottchen held it a kind of holiday pleasure to visit the churchyard, their small arms laden with flowers for the grave of Wendolin's Malva. Lottchen's sympathy, she remembers, would on these occasions flow forth without let or hindrance. In her own mind, there lurked, ever, a certain tinge of pitying contempt for the fate of Paul von Egmont's sweetheart. With a child's healthy skepticism she used to

doubt the wisdom of dying (merely because one lover proved recreant) in a world so full of potential lovers as this ! The philosophy of the grave, the excellence of lying at rest, untouched by praise or blame, by truth or infidelity, come home to her to-day.

“Whoever smells a churchyard flower,” so runs a legend of the Schwarzwald, “shall die within the year.”

Jeanne has stood long beside the sleeping-place of Malva and of Lottchen—the echoless solitude, the golden white sky, the faint cold odor from the grave-gardens seeming to bring to her a kind of peace—when suddenly the words of the legend run through her heart.

A spray of rosemary is still in blossom above poor Malva’s head. She stretches forth her hand to pluck it—her fingers touch the stem—she hesitates, shivers.

“Jeanne !” A man’s voice at a little distance calls to her—a voice, low though it be, which arrests her arm, which hurries back the blood-hue to her cheek.

She turns languidly ; with faint limbs moves a dozen paces away from Malva’s grave, and finds herself face to face with Wolfgang.

“The air grows chill here,” says the master, taking her reluctant hand in his. The cross above the chapel’s roof has in truth at this moment gone from amber to gray. “On the heights among

the Zauberfelsen we shall find ourselves in sunshine for another half hour at least, and half an hour's sunshine is something worth adding to one's life. Come."

He keeps possession of Jeanne's hand: he leads her as one would lead a child forth from the graveyard. A few minutes' climbing brings them to the Zauberfelsen—three or four huge granite boulders bedded among bracken and mosses in the hillside, and upon which, through an oblique clearing in the forests, the crimson level sun streams full.

"I came up to you just in time," the master whispers, after a silence. "Have you lived all these years in the Schwarzwald without learning the fate in store for those who pluck a graveyard flower?"

"Not half a bad fate," answers Jeanne hurriedly, "if the legend were but true! Unfortunately, my faith is lukewarm. I do not believe that death can be wooed and our troubles ended by so easy a means as breaking a sprig of rosemary."

"And what reason have you for talking of trouble—for spending the goldenest hour of the twenty-four among the dead? At my age," says the master, "every day is an anniversary, a fitting occasion for sad remembrance—a day of forced rejoicing like this most of all. But you, little Jeanne, what made you choose the evening of Von

Egmont's return for visiting *her* grave who lies below us there ? ”

“ I chose because there was no joyfuller thing for me to do,” is Jeanne's answer. “ No one wants me in Schloss Egmont. I have no place in the merry-making. And my visit to Wendolin's Malva has done me good,” she adds with an effort. “ It has reminded me that sorrowful lives come to an end, ‘ that even the weariest river ’—you taught me that line once, sir ; you were jealous, you said, that Heine had not written it—‘ that even the weariest river winds somewhere safe to the sea.’ ”

Her deep eyes fill, the wild-rose color dies from out her delicate cheeks.

“ Jeanne, my child,” says Wolfgang, stealing his arm around the girl's slight shoulder, “ am not I your friend ? Are you so changed by association with smart people, by stories of ‘ silks and scandals,’ of court balls and Twickenham dinners, as to count my friendship for nothing ? ”

“ Friendship,” she repeats, with drooping lids, with lips over-ready to surrender. “ Ah, Herr Wolfgang, if I could think, could believe—” Then the scene of which she was an unwilling witness at Badenweiler thrills through her brain ; she turns upon him with an abrupt flash of indignation. “ But you have not the right to speak to me like this. No, sir, you have not the right ! ”

You can not, honestly, be Miss Vivash's suitor one day, and the next—"

"I have never been Miss Vivash's suitor," interrupts Wolfgang firmly, "and never shall be while she and I inhabit the same planet. Through blind accident, a mischievous caprice of Paul von Egmont's sister, I have been thrown into Miss Vivash's society. I have not once forgotten, I hope, the distance that lies between us. As to being her suitor, Fräulein Jeanne, what could have put a notion so extravagant into your head?"

"Your own language and hers," answers Jeanne Dempster unhesitatingly. "There shall be no more secrets, sir, between you and me. I will make full confession of the truth. The other night at Badenweiler, when you and Miss Vivash walked together under the veranda, I was there, hidden and I heard all! It was scarcely my fault at first. You—you came upon me so suddenly I had not time to think about being honorable, and afterward I felt too miserable, too covered with shame, to show myself. Yes, *and I heard all!* Now, believe as badly of me as you choose."

Her head droops on her breast. She turns as though to leave him; but with kindly force Wolfgang's arm holds her close.

Ousel and goldhammer by now have piped themselves to rest; the wind sinks lower as the

sun's last beams fall round and yellow upon the fir-stems. It seems to Jeanne in this palpitating light, this tremulous stillness, as though Nature herself held her breath.

"You heard all." The master's voice comes to her as from a sweet, partially familiar world of dreams. "I half suspected as much when you told me in the ballroom that you would not bear the weight of my perjuries on your soul. You heard all, and I have nothing more to add, for you know—that I love you! It was forced on me," he goes on, like one who would fain settle some moot point of conscience with himself, "to take Miss Vivash into my confidence. She showed a good-natured interest in my prospects, and our talk so shaped itself that I had no choice but to speak to her of my hopes—my hopes of winning Jeanne Dempster's heart. If you heard all, child, you must know that Miss Vivash's forecasts as to my fate were unfavorable. Was she right" (and the tremble of strong emotion is in Wolfgang's voice), "or was I?"

But Jeanne answers not. In thought she passes again through that hour's physical torture when she believed Wolfgang to be false. She sees the error into which blinded jealousy betrayed her; realizes, with rapture so keen as to be wellnigh pain, that she has not, has never had, a rival in his affection.

"If—if you care for me a very little, you have

found a strange way, during the past week, of showing your regard, Herr Wolfgang."

"I might make a like remark, Miss Dempster. Oh, the lonely walks with Sir Christopher (that first walk, on the night of his arrival, not forgotten), the dances with Sir Christopher, the pretty speeches from Sir Christopher, that I have been forced to endure!"

She turns aside; the consciousness of a heart stirred by new instincts painting her face.

"May not Sir Christopher Marlowe have taken pity on me because he saw that I was neglected?"

"And is there not some English saying about pity being near akin to love?"

"As much love as Sir Christopher can give belongs to Lady Pamela Lawless!" cries Jeanne with a deeper blush. It will be long before the scene under the dripping Badenweiler lime-trees ceases to occasion her some retrospective twinges of remorse. "Whatever my sins have been in the past, they are punished—and by you, sir. Is not my name effaced from the theatricals? Have you not refused to play Leoni to my Giulia?"

The master takes her in his arms. During a few quick breaths he holds her close, as though pausing, with epicurean hesitation, on the brink of his own happiness. Then he kisses her.

"As we are making a clean confession," he says presently, "I had better let mine be complete. I am inveterately suspicious by tempera-

ment, jealous as a Spaniard—as well prepare you betimes for the future that is in store for you! I grudged that the eyes of a hundred strangers should see my little Jeanne, rouged, travestied, making equivocal love-speeches before the foot-lights. To women of the world, great ladies, reigning beauties, such an exhibition,” says Wolfgang, “comes in the natural order of things. For you I would have none of it—that much I determined on the evening where a certain simple heart first awoke to vanity, mein Fräulein, in the moment when I first saw a little figure I love, patched and powdered and painted, in Kit Marlowe’s arms. The rest of us will go through our parts to admiration, untroubled, certainly, by any foolish diffidence, and you will put on your muslin frock and coral beads—yes, I will take no refusal about those coral beads—sit, Griselda-fashion, in a corner, and listen to our plaudits.”

“And not dance throughout the evening, of course, sir? Say ‘No,’ even if Count Paul should invite me to be his partner?”

“Even if Count Paul should invite you!” repeats Wolfgang, with a smile, repressed, ere Jeanne has had time to suspect its import. “Ay, there will be the crucial temptation. How, if Count Paul should offer himself—not as your partner in a waltz only? How if he should place Schloss Egmont and all belonging to it, Count Paul included, at your feet?”

“Schloss Egmont and all belonging to it will be offered to Miss Vivash,” says Jeanne, not without a certain wistfulness. “Count Paul, we know, is a passionate worshiper of beauty, and I—although Mr. Wolfgang is good enough to care for me a little—I have red hair and freckles and thin arms, and might sit as a model, so says Miss Vivash, in the Great Art School of Ugliness. Do you suppose Count Paul would even look at me in *her* presence?”

“Hard to prognosticate. Paul von Egmont, like all his race, is of an unreliable, many-sided temperament. Although his artistic sense may have been led captive by a full-cut mouth, a sweep of throat (and such charms will pose for you in Rome, I am told, at five lire the hour), who shall say that the fellow is not true at heart to his boyish ideal, that he may not wish to take up his life and the best inspiration for art at the point where he was faithless to both more than a dozen years ago? Little Jeanne,” says Wolfgang, earnestly, “would you have strength to withstand the temptation, did it arrive? On one side, a position, name, competence; on the other—”

But Jeanne’s arms are round the master’s neck; her dark eyes look up, with infinite tenderness in their depths, to his.

“For competence, for position, for all that Count Paul von Egmont has to offer, I care no-

thing. Miss Vivash may have them, freely. She can not take from me the only riches, the only happiness I desire to possess."

Her voice, her glance might set jealousy, even more inveterate than Wolfgang's, at rest.

CHAPTER XIX.

BEAUTY'S CROWNING TRIUMPH.

EIGHT o'clock has struck ; the guests are assembled ; the curtain is in readiness to rise. But the places of honor, in the foremost row of "stalls," remain unoccupied. Their High Transparencies, at the Residenz, have not even sent a gentleman-in-waiting to represent them. Paul von Egmont himself arrives not.

Miss Vivash, an ideally lovely (stage) Duchess, in paste brilliants, satins, rouge, is not at the smallest pains to dissemble her ill humor from her fellow actors. Coquettes have existed, in poets' brains, if nowhere else, who, on occasion, would pardon a man the injury they had wrought him. "Oft she rejects," wrote Pope of his Belinda, "but never once offends." From the ashes of each of Ninon's discarded lovers, we read, arose, phoenix-like, a friend ! The type is obsolete. Modern beauty has her head too full of practical business interests to give heed to the finer niceties of

generous sentiment. Pass beyond the stage of concrete admiration, the stage of bracelets, bouquets, and opera-tickets; escape with only a surface-wound or two, as Sir Christopher and Wolfgang have both escaped from Vivian's hands, and she will feel such bitterness toward you as only foiled vanity, frustrated greed of conquest, can, in a nature of a certain caliber, engender.

"If I could have foreseen that the thing was to end in a contemptible *fiasco*, I would have thrown up my part at the eleventh hour." (Thus the Goddess, angrily pacing up and down the boards of the extemporized green-room.) "Indeed, I am by no means certain I shall not do so now."

"And our audience?" expostulates Wolfgang. "The hundred and fifty spectators who, at this moment, await the rising of the curtain?"

"An audience of dowds and boors!" (The body of the saal is filled with Grafs, Gräfins, and barons—the whole collected High-well-borns of the district. The workmen and smaller *bourgeois* of St. Ulrich have, by Paul von Egmont's orders, been admitted to the music-gallery.) "Of course, if one were in a first-rate *troupe* it would be different. Even before a set of country bumpkins one might act, for the pleasure of acting. But with such a cast as ours!—"

"Thanks for the implied compliment," cries Sir Christopher, from the corner where he and Lady Pamela are contentedly rehearsing, or fore-

stalling, their coming love-scenes. "The cakes are eaten, the ale is drunk, Miss Vivash. Still, I remember the day when you and I flattered ourselves on being two of the best amateur actors in London—or Leamington, which was it?"

The Beauty's pale eyes flash. It was in Leamington that Kit Marlowe, not one brief twelve-month ago, received the blow that should have been his death-wound. And Kit Marlowe is heart-whole already—nay, if a certain radiant look on Lady Pamela's face speak true, is already far upon the road to another and a happier love.

"A thousand pities the cast was changed," she resumes. "Little Jeanne's classic pronunciation would have appealed, charmingly, in her final speech to the gods, our critics.

"'Oh, bray don't do anything for mich! Apove all, matam, don't get me a huspand.'"

So Miss Vivash imitates, or believes she imitates, the slightly German accents of Jeanne Dempster's voice. The color deepens on Wolfgang's face; but self-control is the habit of his life, and he keeps his temper to admiration.

"Brava, Miss Vivash, brava! If Paul von Egmont have inherited the family proclivities, he will be a lover of all things dramatic, a judge of histrionic talent. Be sure he will appreciate your powers of mimicry to the full!"

Even while Wolfgang speaks, the blast from a postilion's horn reëchoes through the avenue;

the clang of horses' hoofs, the rattling of wheels, stir in the court below. A couple of minutes later come the sound of footsteps passing the green-room ; there is a creaking of hinges as the doors of the audience-saal are thrown open, and then—a hush ! Paul von Egmont, if it be he, is welcomed to his father's house with more state than enthusiasm.

Lady Pamela and Vivian rush, with one accord, from the green-room across the stage.

“A faded-looking lad with well-cut clothes, a military order on his breast, an inch and a half of brain, and eyelids.” So exclaims Lady Pamela, peeping cautiously between the folds of the curtain. “A couple of faded followers, all bows and scrapes, and yellow gloves and polished boots ! Can *this* be the careless Bohemian, the prodigal son, the picturesque heir of all the Von Egmonts !”

“It is the young Prince, Ernest Waldemar,” cries Vivian, an inflection of newly-awakened eagerness in her voice. “He must have heard—the people at the Residenz must have heard—that *I* was to act. Don't you remember Mr. Chodd's wrath about him at the Derby ? Prince Ernest was on Lord William Frederick's drag, and poor Samuel would not allow me— Oh” (breaking away from these reminiscences of the Chodd tragedy), “we must begin at once ! now that his Highness is here, it would be in the

worst possible taste to wait. Paul von Egmont desired, in his last telegram, that the curtain should rise punctually at eight, whether he arrived in time or not.—Am I rouged enough, my dear Pamela? Are you certain my left patch is in its proper place?—Sir Christopher, you understand these things” (turning to her old lover with restored affability)—“is not my left patch the least fraction imaginable too low?”

She flies to one of the mirrors in the green-room, and holding a taper on high, surveys the artificial snow and rose-bloom of her own face, eagerly. Sir Christopher Marlowe follows her.

“For anything short of princes, I should say, let the patch stand,” he remarks after grave deliberation. “For a scion, no matter how remote, of royal blood, I consider the patch one sixteenth part of an inch too low.”

“Honestly and truly?”

“On my faith as an Englishman. You must think poorly of my principles, Miss Vivash—you must consider me culpably light-minded, if you can suspect me even of a jest in such a matter!”

Well-cut clothes; a military order; an inch and a half of brain; and eyelids—a somewhat inadequate summing up, one would say, of any human creature possessing the normal amount of bone, muscle, nerve, and phosphorus. Still, considering the very small *rôle* Prince Ernest Waldemar has to play in the drama of Beauty’s life,

we may, perhaps, allow Lady Pamela's rapid silhouette to pass as a likeness !

Whatever intellectual qualifications accompany his clothes and his order, Ernest Waldemar, at least, is a prince ; and, inspired by the delightful consciousness of quasi-royal presence, Vivian surpasses herself in the performance of her part. Above all, although she has to play down to the teaching-man from Freiburg, do the "scenes of love and jealousy" elicit applause from his Highness's delicately gloved, pearl-gray hands. Tender, by natural default, Vivian Vivash can not be, either before foot-lights or away from them. The mute, pathetic touches, the fine and subtle tints of emotion by which a character like Olympia's can be lifted out of the realms of commonplace, are wanting. In effective poses of limb and head, in alluring glances, in the sweep of a train, in the furl of a fan, in all the graces of such heroines as Offenbach's and Le Clerc's, the Hyde Park Goddess need only remain herself, to be perfection !

Prince Ernest Waldemar applauds long and frequently ; the gentlemen of the Court who accompany him applaud ; the audience, from the highest Hochwohlgeboren in the front seats, to the clock-makers and wood-merchants in the gallery, applaud — human nature, in this matter of following the leader, being much the same in the Black Forest as in nineteenth-century London.

Scarcely in the palmiest days of her first season (those brief, enchanted days when, under Lord Vauxhall's guidance, she learned hourly to shape her lips to higher titles, when all the smart town ladies imitated the cut and color of her one provincial gown) did Vivian obtain a more genuine ovation than has befallen her now, a dethroned, scepterless queen, and an exile.

And still her triumph is incomplete ! Just as in London there was ever one drawing-room into which the very highest bribery and corruption could not gain her admittance, one painter who sought not to immortalize her in his pictures, one editor whose columns were closed to the mention of her charms, so, to-night, one drop is wanting in the cup of her success. The craving heart of Vivian Vivash is dissatisfied ; yes, even when, the performance over, she walks around the ballroom on Prince Ernest Waldemar's arm. One drop is wanting in the cup—Paul von Egmont is not here to swell the list of her worshipers !

Is she sure of him ?

Poor Beauty has lost so many things within the last few weeks, has felt so much ground crumble away beneath her feet, that she is prepared for misadventure—prepared for every cruel transformation in that ficklest of all human possessions, man's favor ! Sir Christopher, the most Quixotic once of lovers, consoled, and by her own familiar friend—Sir Christopher, whobut for Will-

o'-the-wisp visions of strawberry-leaves, would have given over his happiness, his honor, to her keeping! Mr. Chodd's half million lost for the sake of a Twickenham dinner and of Lord Vauxhall! Even Wolfgang's valueless heart in the possession of little red-haired Jeanne!

How if Von Egmont's romantic worship should end—in a sketch for the next Munich Exhibition, or a copy, say, of impassioned German verses!—end in the clouds, as, alas! so much artistic admiration of the florid order has already done! Passing homages, ballroom compliments from a prince of royal blood, are sweet. Who knows the smarting sweetness thereof better than Vivian Vivash? But princes of royal blood, however æsthetic in their taste, must look for wives among kings' daughters. Their prettiest speeches are such stuff as dreams are made of. And the solid walls and towers of Schloss Egmont are realities. And she, the fairest woman the world has seen since the days of the Queen of Sheba, is six-and-twenty, and unwed!

“Et Monsieur Chodd?” asks the Prince, condescending to press the hand that rests upon his arm; “le pauvre Monsieur Chodd?” (or as his Highness pronounces the name, Jodd.) “Qu'est il devenu?”

“Mr. Chodd left London an eternity ago,” says Vivian.—“Mr. Chodd is making a lengthened tour in Lapland for his health.”

"He suffers, as you call it, vom heart complaint?" asks his Highness.

Beauty laughs, but uneasily. The mention of her quondam suitor's name seems like an evil omen at this new turning-point of her ever-shifting career.

It stands in the evening's programme that the fiddlers, honest members of the St. Ulrich Philharmonic, shall begin their labors at ten. Already the band-master, hot and important, is at his post in the music-gallery; already a preliminary scraping of strings is warning old gentlemen to look for whist-tables, and young ones to look for partners—when Hans, his cheeks redder than the facings of his livery, makes his way toward the dais at the upper end of the dancing-saal. He whispers a hurried message to Mamselle Ange, at this moment doing the honors, in all the glory of her ribbons and flounces, to the Prince. Ere another minute passes, the news that Paul von Egmont has arrived begins to circulate with electric speed through the ballroom; and soon, from the avenue and gardens without, rises a shout, loud, prolonged, sonorous—a true Black Forest "Hoch!" to the like of which the gray old walls have not echoed since the day when the Countess Dolores was first brought home to the palatinate, a bride.

A thrill goes through every feminine breast in

the assemblage—from the most venerable of the Fräuleins von Katzenellenbogen, down to little Jeanne in her confirmation frock and coral beads. Mamselle Ange, ludicrously irresolute, hovers suspended, like Mohammed's coffin, between the dais and the door. Her heart yearns to welcome Paul, the boy whose smile she would recognize among a thousand—yet will etiquette not suffer her to turn her back upon a prince of the reigning family, so long as that prince shall think fit, by word or look, to recognize the fact of her existence.

Just at this exciting juncture Sir Christopher Marlowe, still wearing the silks and laces of Cesario, crosses the ballroom to Jeanne. He is fanning himself daintily with his three-cornered velvet hat, a rose is in the button-hole of his azure satin coat, a diamond snuff-box in his left hand. His powdered love-locks, his ruffles, rouge, and patches, become his accurately handsome face to a nicety. It would be hard, save on the canvas of Boucher or of Watteau, to find a more artistically perfect representation of the eighteenth-century marquis than that presented by Kit Marlowe. (Possibly the historian of the future may pronounce the difference slight—one of degree, rather than kind—between the Victorian dandy and the *frizé*, painted *petit-maitre* of the Regency.) Jeanne bethinks her of Wolfgang's Spartan indifference to fashion-books and tailors' shops—not without a certain sense of pride in the contrast.

"Will you give me the first waltz of the evening," he supplicates, with a bow that surely Lord Vauxhall could not surpass, "or has Donald been before me?"

The blush on Jeanne's cheek might rival an April sunrise over the Blauen.

"If by 'Donald' you mean Mr. Wolfgang, you ought to know that he is engaged. On the evening you all arrived here, Miss Vivash promised to give him the first dance after the theatricals."

"And you think the promise will hold good, now that Von Egmont has arrived? Well, I, for one, have no false pride," cries Sir Christopher, drawing Jeanne's hand under his arm. "Although merit can not always win the race, perseverance may insure one's coming in a decent second, may it not?"

"I am not quite sure what you mean by 'second,'" says Jeanne, with a glance in the direction of Lady Pamela.

Kit Marlowe's face becomes grave to edification.

"*On se range*," he observes in the melancholy tone of a man who has been married a dozen years. "Who shall say, in the present instance, through what agency? If it had not been for our dance in Badenweiler, my dear, for our wetting in the thunderstorm, our *philosophie à deux* under the lime-trees—"

"I should not have lost my voice and my share in the theatricals," cries Jeanne gayly. "I might

have won as many laurels as the best of you. But it is too late now for regrets. No use, the Wald folk say, in mourning over a harvest that never was sown."

"Especially when one's present prospects are cloudy. Ah ! little Jeanne" (in a sentimental whisper), "rivals gather round me fast. Against our particular Teuton I am forewarned, but not against a legion of Teutons—not against royal highnesses, barons, and counts ! If the returned prodigal—if Paul von Egmont should invite you, suddenly, for this waltz, I wonder in how many seconds you would have the cruelty to throw me over?"

"The returned prodigal will dance with every noble lady present before he thinks of me—if indeed he thinks of me at all," says Jeanne evasively.

But her pulse, as she speaks, beats high ; her eyes scan the crowds that line the entrance-hall with keenest interest. Her heart's whole love she has given to Wolfgang ; she would quit Schloss Egmont, would start with him, glad sharer of his poverty, to the ends of the world, to-morrow ! And still, to-night, she craves—passionately craves for a sight of Paul von Egmont. The master himself might pardon the infidelity. Through how many lonely bygone years has not Paul von Egmont's boyish face been her companion, her ideal, I had almost said the god of her idolatry ?

A movement begins to vibrate through the crowd. The musicians play eight bars of the opening waltz. Prince Ernest Waldemar, with the stoutest, most noble married lady present, prepares to lead the ball. The gentlemen of the Court choose their partners and follow. And then, as the non-dancers clear away, Jeanne discovers—not Paul von Egmont, but Wolfgang, quietly standing beside Mamselle Ange, near the door, with Vivian on his arm.

The master is in evening dress ; his head is held high ; some subtile transformation seems to have come over his whole manner and person. He exchanges a word, a salutation, with all who pass him in the crowd. And Beauty smiles on him—not as once she smiled, but timidly, imploringly ! Beauty hangs, with eager show of interest, on his words. Beauty sighs, turns aside her face, calls into action her whole artillery of well-used charms for his benefit !

Can a Bond Street coat, a cambric cravat, a pair of lavender gloves have wrought this change, or is Miss Vivash tardily repentant ? Does she remember, with compunction, how she strove for Wolfgang's heart, but to break it ? Does she think of the letters she wrote her beloved princess, of the dust she wiped from the master's threadbare sleeve, of the bored hours spent in his society, while she longed, openly and without disguise, for Paul von Egmont's return ?

Jeanne's beating heart is in a tumult. She feels herself whirled round, amid an ocean of laces and tulles and satins, in Sir Christopher's arms. Mingling with her partner's whispered gallantries, she hears the rushing of flying footsteps. She sees the lights, the flowers, the garlanded walls, like one who dreams. Confused foreshadowings of some overwhelming surprise, some revolution in her fate, are upon her—vivid, despite their incoherency. Her cheeks suffuse ; her deep eyes are alight with animation. Never during her seventeen years of life has Janet Dempster looked so fair.

The moment the waltz ends, a throng of young men flock around, eager to write their names upon the *débutante's* card. But Wolfgang, who has quickly consigned Vivian to the Prince, bears her away from them all and from the ballroom.

"You are looking your best, my little Jeanne," he whispers. "And the moment of temptation is at hand : Paul von Egmont is in the oak parlor, and desires to make himself known to you."

CHAPTER XX.

UPON THE ARM OF A PRINCE.

A SOLITARY lamp sheds its rays upon the young Count's portrait, upon the marble spirit-faces of Goethe and Schiller. A sleepy fire of early moonlight cleaves the dusk. No sound of distant

clarionet or fiddle jars on the ear. Through wide-opened windows streams the air, untainted by wine, millefleurs, patchouli—fresh only with the keen night-odors of the adjacent Wald.

“At last !” says Wolfgang, closing the door behind them, then taking Jeanne’s trembling hands and drawing her to his side. “Jeanne, little sweetheart, what have you all been thinking about in Schloss Egmont not to recognize me sooner ?”

“To recognize—Mr. Wolfgang !”

“I have been with you, at all hours of the twenty-four, in this very room. (Do you remember the night when Ange imprisoned me here ?) Paul von Egmont’s name ever on your lips, his portrait ever before your eyes, and yet the truth has not once been suspected ! A terrible lesson as to what a dozen years’ wear-and-tear will do for a man.”

Thus speaking, Wolfgang places himself beneath the portrait ; and suddenly a veil seems lifted from before Jeanne Dempster’s sight. The boy’s fair cheek has grown bronzed ; the hair has lost its brightness ; but for the rest—forehead, eyes, expression—all remain unchanged.

A choking sensation rises in the poor child’s throat—her limbs tremble. It seems to her as though the earth itself—the good old familiar earth on which she and Wolfgang construed and parsed, quarreled and fell in love together—were melting away beneath her feet. In such a crisis, the first thought of a woman of the world would

be that she had gained a wealthy lover. To Jeanne's simple heart the crushing, intolerable dread is, that she may have lost a poor one !

"Count Paul, gnädiger Herr," she is beginning, while a thousand confirmatory trifles, unheeded at the time, rush back in a crowd upon her memory, "how shall I ever ask your forgiveness?"

"You have every reason to feel conscience-stricken," he interrupts her. "With Miss Vivash I have been fortunate enough to establish a truce. With Ange I have already made my peace—our good Ange, who declares that she had intuitions pointing in the right direction from the first moment that she heard my voice. But you—to be rejected after months or weeks of acquaintance would be stab enough to a man's vanity—but you, Jeanne, have rejected me unheard. Oh" (as she tries to stammer forth an excuse), "you think that I can forget what you told me, six hours ago, upon the Zauberfelsen? You would value a home, a name, all that Von Egmont could offer, not one jot. Miss Vivash might have them freely. Do you say so still?"

"I say that my heart belongs to my master, to Herr Wolfgang," she answers, lifting her face, dyed in loveliest shame, to his. "If I had known sooner—"

"That Herr Wolfgang was an impostor, a sham, a pretender, you would have felt toward him as he deserved? Little Jeanne, be pitiful.

Remember the evening on the terrace when you told me" (his dark cheek pales) "the story of Paul von Egmont's youth! Remember *what* cause has made him shrink from returning under his own name to his father's house!"

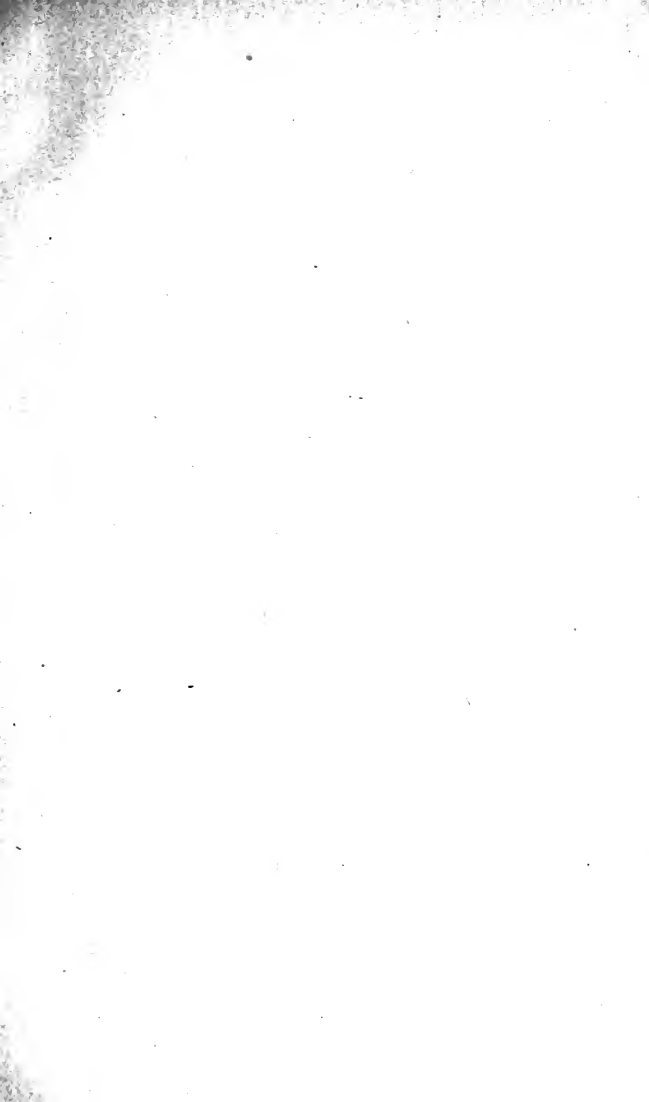
For a few seconds Jeanne is mute. Then, timidly, she rests her hand upon Von Egmont's arm.

"I believe, sir, that I have cared for you a little all my life." (As though to gain courage, she glances up at the friendly, boyish face upon the wall.) "And I know you will continue to be Herr Wolfgang, my master, until the day I die."

He folds her to his breast without another word.

When they reënter the ballroom the violins are playing; the first square dance of the evening has been formed. Kit Marlowe and Lady Pamela stand side by side, best-mated of partners, for a Lancers, or for the somewhat more complicated set of figures called Life. Prince Ernest Waldemar is Beauty's cavalier.

Ill-starred Beauty, regnant, alas! no longer; loverless, friendless, although she leans upon the arm of a prince! With smiles gilding the practiced, painted lip, but with bitterest disappointment, with the remembrance of opportunities lost, gifts misused, natural affections quenched in her heart. . . . So for the present we take our leave of her.





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